

# MACMILLAN'S MAGAZINE.

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## A PHILOSOPHER'S ROMANCE.

### CHAPTER XVI.

It took much less time than I had imagined possible to reach the grotto again, for in my previous exploration I must have made a considerable round before gaining Padre Cristoffero's dwelling. The accustomed feet, however, of the priest and his servant took the most direct way to the haunt of the ancient saint, where we arrived to find Iridé watching with some consternation the expiring flicker of the candle in her lantern. She was shivering violently from enforced inaction after her battle with the Bora, and I much feared something serious; but old Anna administered warm milk, rubbed the girl's feet, and forced her afterwards to rise and feel that she had some strength left; and thus we got her up the stairs and out into the open air.

She shrank for a moment and cowered before the awful blast that was still abroad; then bravely gathering herself together, and supported on either hand by the peasant and myself, we set forth once more. Padre Cristoffero went first, and it must be confessed presented a singular appearance, being, by reason of the thickness of his garments, almost as broad as he was long, and moreover having occasionally to make sudden involuntary advances or digressions from side to side, in obedience to the force of the wind. At any other time it would

have been almost impossible not to be merry at the Padre's expense, but the present was no occasion for mirth, and I for one was very thankful when we all four arrived safely within the walls of the rough dwelling.

My venerable host and I retired to his study, where, with the aid of plenty of blankets, I was made comfortable upon a wooden sofa, or rather wide bench; and here, knowing Iridé safe, and knowing too that for several hours no further steps with regard to her could possibly be taken, I fell fast asleep; for now that rest was allowable I felt very weary and exhausted. Anna was tending my charge by the kitchen-fire, and Padre Cristoffero had retired to his own room. There was no sound but the crackling of the wood in the stove and the ceaseless roar of the Bora without; it reached me of course more or less faintly, but it was always there, producing much the same impression as the applying of a big sea-shell to the ear. It seemed every now and then to die away in a series of fantastic cadences, and then to advance once more as with the sweep of huge wings above the shuddering roof. But all this external turmoil only added to my sense of repose, and I lay and rested in a splendid languor of content, presently succeeded by the unconsciousness of a slumber that must have lasted several hours, for when I woke the sun was bright and the wind somewhat

abated. Padre Cristoffero's benevolent countenance was peering in at the door, and became irradiated with a smile when he saw that I was stirring.

"I trust you have rested, Romagno," he said. "The lady is well, Anna tells me, but very much exhausted; she must remain quiet for many hours yet, before she will be fit for further traveling, and, in the meantime, when we have had some breakfast, you will perhaps accompany me as far as the village where I have business at the inn."

I stole into the kitchen before eating, and was greeted by Anna with a finger on her lip to enforce silence. Iridé, fast asleep, lay upon a couch similar to the one I had occupied; her pale face shone lovelier than ever among the coarse homely coverings, and her hair streaked all the pillow with its silky filaments, while her long black lashes lay motionless on the melting Southern round of her cheek, and the breath came so quietly through the delicate curve of her lips that I was fain to stoop nearer to reassure myself that she was really breathing at all. For a long time, the peasant told me, she had been restless, and spoken much of someone to whom she alluded as "Tome"; but half an hour previously she had fallen into this peaceful slumber in which youth and health were re-asserting themselves. So far so good, and I prepared to escort Padre Cristoffero to the village with a sense of present ease, although I could see but a short way into the future and by no means determine the best course to pursue; philosophy, however, bade me be of good cheer, and not seek to pry too far forward, since those who do so are often foiled by circumstances yet unknown.

Padre Cristoffero's errand was simple enough. He went to St. Servolo's village to take up his abode

with the priest there, thus, as he pointed out to me, ensuring perfect quiet and Anna's undivided attention for Iridé. When she was able to travel he could return; until then all my remonstrances were useless to dissuade him from his purpose.

"And listen, Romagno; I cannot tell lies about any matter concerning the young lady, so it is best that I should know nothing; then, if awkward questions should be asked me, I can truthfully plead ignorance."

I ate a plateful of hot polenta and drank half a pint of wine at the inn before returning. As I mounted the hill again I was joined by Anna's husband, on the way to ask his wife for her commissions for Soloporto, to which place he proposed to go by train that evening, as the Bora was now slightly abating.

My charge was much better, so far recovered indeed that she had begun to fret over the trying position of her lover, who must be in Vienna without any news, and naturally anxious to know what had become of us.

"If this man is going to the station surely you could give him a telegram to send to Vienna," she said; "then at any rate Tome [she had never been able to pronounce Willoughby's name in proper English fashion] would know I was safe with you. As it is, he may fancy my father has caught us, and come suddenly back to Soloporto to find out about me."

Upon reflection it appeared to me that this proceeding was one which Willoughby might very reasonably adopt, and certainly nothing could be much more disastrous than for him to show himself in Soloporto; but in the meantime what was I to do with Iridé? I said to myself (prompted by philosophy) that the time had come for Willoughby to manage his own affairs, my success in which, I was fain to confess, had

been inconspicuous, though no one could accuse me of not having done my best. Accordingly I wrote the following telegram, addressing it to Thomas's hotel in Vienna, but dating it from Borst, a village outside Soloporto, whence I had thought it best that the peasant should send it: "Come at once to St. Servolo, to fetch what you value most." I did not sign at all for transmission, thinking it possible, though not probable, that the telegraph-offices had been warned; and having seen my messenger depart I prepared to pass the time as best I could.

It was hard work! Padre Cristoffero's library, consisting chiefly of ecclesiastical books of reference, afforded me but a barren field in the way of literature. I had neither cobbling nor tailoring materials with me, or I would gladly have occupied myself upon the repairs which were obviously needful in various garments and shoes, perhaps tossed into the corner where I found them in anticipation of my possible arrival. You have no idea how trying it is to a person of my disposition to see a shoe or a coat in need of attention and to be quite unable, however willing, to attend to the need. At last I found a Soloporto paper (a month old), and steadily concentrating my attention I read it through, advertisements and all, from beginning to end. It took me exactly one hour and a half by the very noisy clock on the table, and by a tremendous effort of will I fixed my mind upon words which possessed not the slightest shred of interest for me. Then I sat still for a time, wondering what Thomas would do when he returned, as would undoubtedly be the case, to fetch Iridé. Would he still propose flight to England, or what would be the alternative? And then I reflected that, once he was in charge of his

*innamorata*, I should be free!—free to accomplish the purpose which had grown into half my life, free to take vengeance upon Moses Lazarich, free—and here my musings came to a sudden end. What, I asked myself, was I waiting for? Once Baron Mancini was out of the way, no one would oppose the marriage. Zia Bianca had been favourably enough inclined, and was not likely to offer any objection, and Iridé had no other relatives in a position to dictate to her. As I thought of all these things I felt the old hatred wake out of its uneasy slumber; I felt my nerves stir and thrill; a thousand recollections of long past days crowded upon my memory; I remembered the man's cunning greed, his abjectness in my prosperity, his insolence in my adversity; I remembered how long Time had thwarted my desires, and how long in deference to friendship I had held my hand. And now reason cried that no more delay was needful,—nay more, that it might be dangerous, inimical to the interests of those I wished to serve, if I postponed my enemy's fate. I felt for my knife, or rather poignard, a weapon I had bought years before in Calabria; and as I clasped the haft I remembered that I had gone dinnerless the day I paid for it, in order to make up a sum I could ill afford. There were letters scratched on the blade too; I had marked them myself, *J. E. to M. L.*,—Joseph Egerton to Moses Lazarich. I had sworn that one day the Jew's blood should wash those letters, and now,—now,—it was to be done!

The fact that my enemy was Iridé's father troubled me not at all. He was a comparative stranger to his daughter, having seen her only at rare and irregular intervals until he came to Soloporto; since which event she had certainly had

but little reason to love him. Besides philosophy bade me detach Lazarich's actions from everyone but myself. Against Thomas Willoughby's prospective father-in-law I had nothing, but against the man who had ruined me I had many things. I fell to thinking, and presently to striding up and down the tiny room with such energy, not to say violence, that the windows rattled and the planks, protesting against such usage, creaked under my tread. Then I suddenly paused in my pacing to consider any needful preparations; this I did purely from the conventionality which gradually crystallises round us all, and often prevents the realisation even of our own most intimate circumstances. The philosopher, as a momentary reflection convinced me, has no particular preparations to make for anything; his mental attitude produces, or should produce, complete detachment from all outward relationships; to weal or woe, blessing or cursing, life or death, his cultivated neutrality should present the same aspect. Nothing should please or shock him; nothing should excite his emotions; he should be an abstraction in human shape, impervious to change, knowing no sorrow because joy also is equally unknown.

This of course is the ideal philosophical attitude, and one to which, I fancy, few, if any, people have ever attained. The intelligent reader will hardly have failed to realise how very far short I myself fell of this counsel of perfection, which would have forbidden any ill feelings towards the Jew, and quite prevented my active good will in Thomas Willoughby's cause. But then I have never laid claim to be more than one of the humblest of philosophy's disciples, being, like most other men, before all things human; and humanity, my friends, is an irreconcilable quantity. However,

my few minutes' musing told me that the time was ripe. I was ready, so was my poignard; and, so far as I knew, Moses Lazarich was in his house in Soloporto, where I had resolved that my deed would be most speedily and certainly accomplished. I was strong after my rest: I would go on foot to the town, and my arm would not fail to strike home; but first I must have food, and I went to the kitchen to find old Anna for that purpose. She sat near the hearth, her withered face working as her old mouth mumbled prayers and her beads slipped fast through her lean fingers; the leaping flames threw her wrinkles into strong relief, and made her sunken eyes look yet more cavernous, while her stiff grizzled hair stood out under the white starched kerchief that was tied round her head. Iridé had gone to sleep again, and as her guardian rose to reach me bread and a bowl of milk set to keep warm near the embers, she raised her hand to enjoin silence, looking like some witch who had cast her spell over a beauteous fairy. I was not sorry to leave a message for Iridé instead of speaking to her myself before my departure.

"Tell her," I said to Anna, "that I have gone to the town to see how things are, that in case I do not return to-morrow she is to remain quietly here with you and not try to go away. Tell her that the friend whom she calls Tome will certainly not delay in fetching her, and that I leave her my best and most enduring wishes for happiness."

By walking quickly in ordinary weather one could reach Soloporto from St. Servolo in four and a half or five hours; but I was making the journey in a Bora which, if its decreasing force rose again, as was only too likely with the fall of darkness, might compel me to shelter as best I could for hours before being able to



go on. I dared not travel by rail from the station at which we had arrived, as I felt almost certain that my description must have been circulated among the railway officials; and besides, the latest train would land me in the town at an earlier hour than at which I wanted to arrive, for until midnight or later there might be people abroad in the streets if the wind was not too violent. Before my purpose was accomplished I had no mind for arrest or delay; as to what might come afterwards I was profoundly indifferent. All my hopes and seekings and strugglings for many years past had been more or less directly centred on this one object; a few brief seconds would serve for the culmination and satisfaction of my hope and vengeance, and afterwards—afterwards—I felt so little interest in the afterwards that my mind did not exert itself in any thought for the near future. At the worst I could only be hanged; a man can die but once, and having accomplished his life's purpose should not shrink from the laying down of that humanity which has been design and instrument in one.

The gaunt grey ruins of the old castle stood, only a quarter of a mile from Padre Cristoffero's cottage, on the sheer edge of the rocky rim, as it were, of the higher Karst, whence there was an abrupt fall to the slope that rolled gradually down to the sea-level far beyond. This rim or crest was broken at intervals along its many miles of length by large cracks or passes, down the steep defile of one of which lay the narrow footpath to the village. As I gained the head of this and stood to look abroad for a moment, a strange exultation, a kind of triumph, took possession of me, and I was overwhelmed by a mysterious sense of Nature's kinship. The fierce freezing wind sang shrilly past my ears, and swept away in measured

moanings over the broad and desolate plains below; there was power, relentless power, in every surge of its strong straight breath. The crimson glare of the last light was half muffled in dark and angry clouds that served to heighten its colour, for the blood-red glow was caught upon the grey and stormy mantle of the darkness that was closing round that winter day. The barren rocks were rosy with it, and a strange light lay over the land, while a last gleam from the sunken sun pointed like a finger of flame across the ocean, broken landward into a thousand fiery sparkles that tinged the white foam-crests on the unquiet waters. Murder spoke to me from the sky; it was echoed from the crags; its message came hoarsely whispered from the hollows of night that were beginning to brood over the earth; its finger beckoned me over the sea, and its voice rang clear and clean in the biting wind. There was no sign of life in the scattered red-roofed villages; what living thing would go abroad in such weather? The birds had fled: no glancing wing broke across the troubled clouds; and as I stood upon that lonely height, gazing beyond the unpeopled wilderness and out over the limitless ocean, I alone seemed living in the world, I and my red-handed brother that men call Vengeance. The spirit that came with Odin across the northern snows was within me now; the pulse that stirred mankind without let or hindrance, ere the White Christ was preached, throbbed through all my nature; the lust for blood was upon me, and swift of foot, light of heart, I went on my way to meet the old, old curse of Cain.

Of the hours that followed my memory is but confused. My feet carried me mechanically forward, and my heart was ever ahead of my pace. Sometimes I passed among trees, their leafless branches making a black and

moving medley of shadows by the light of the drifting moon; sometimes my tread rang hard on the bare high road, a rigid line showing faintly far ahead; sometimes I stumbled among frozen tussocks and frosted stones. But always I went on, ever onwards, while the torn clouds fled across the midnight sky, and the terrible icy wind screamed upon its desolate way among the solitudes. Sometimes the murmur of the storm-tossed sea reached my ears, even above the Bora's blast; once or twice I heard the deep booming hum of the wind harping roughly upon the telegraph-wires. How many hours I spent upon my journey I do not know, nor can I even guess; suffice it to say that at length in the pitchy darkness of a winter morning, when the moon had set, I found myself among the straggling houses and market-gardens that form the outskirts of Soloporto, whence in a very short time I gained the principal thoroughfares of the town.

The Bora moaned and shrieked in the empty streets, wide and narrow; it hurtled among the roofs and chimneys, and shook the hanging leaden labels attached to each lamp-post, with a fierce persistence till the insensate things rattled like castanets. As I crossed the Piazza Grande, with its two groups of handsome gas-lamps arranged like candelabra upon stone columns, the heavy ornamental chains hanging among the metal work swayed in the wind like hempen ropes. Half way between the two groups a fiercer blast brought me to my knees for a moment, during which I heard the sudden ring of iron, and when I had risen to my feet once more and reached the further cluster of flickering lights, one of the great looped chains swung, a forlorn fragment, while the rest of its links strewed the ground.

I went on, under the great archway beneath the Municipio, and so into

the narrow street where Thomas Willoughby had first come into my life; but this was no time for pause or sentiment. I went straight on, and never stopped until, five minutes' walk from the Corsia Giulietta, I halted for a moment in a deep-set entrance to seek in my pocket for the duplicate key of Baron Mancini's door. It did not take long to find it, together with a latch-key which fitted the door of his own flat upon the first floor, and I was ready to go on when a faint little cry reached my ears. I stooped, and found a miserable, half frozen kitten nearly dead of cold. I picked it up and rubbed its soft head against my cheek; for a second I hesitated, then, feeling I could not leave it to perish, I tucked it down inside the breast of my thick coat, and buttoned up that garment once more as I started forward. From sheer habit I tried the lock of the door before inserting the key; to my amazement the handle turned, and I entered without difficulty. The substitute procured during my unexpected absence had done his work with amazing, if convenient, carelessness!

A dim light was burning, according to custom, in the lamp that swung from the ceiling, and by its help I silently opened my lodge, and taking off my coat and boots I put the former on the floor, first tucking up the kitten in its warm folds. Then I went on up the stair, and stood calm and nerved for the deed of my life before Moses Lazarich's door. The latch-key was in my hand, but as I gently put it into the keyhole the whole door gave, and I saw that it was merely closed, not even properly shut. All hinges in this house were kept well oiled, therefore my entrance was perfectly noiseless; but as I stood inside the vestibule a sudden thought occurred to me. So far Fortune seemed to have been lavishly, miraculously kind;

but what if the whole thing was a trap? What if I walked within the next thirty seconds into the arms of a *gendarme*? The idea made me pause to draw my poignard, and thus prepared I crept on once more.

Half way down the passage a heavy swing door shut off the Baron's private rooms from the rest of the house, and as I pulled it open and, slipping through, closed it behind me, even my seasoned heart beat a little higher at the near prospect. Just beyond the swing door was the entrance to the study and smoking-room, and through this again, I knew, opened the dressing and bedrooms; both had external doors into the passage, but I preferred to take the inner road, and therefore pushed open the door of the smoking-room which, like all the others, was ajar.

There was neither lamp nor candle here, but a couple of logs, still flaming on the hearth, threw out mysterious dancing shadows. The light struck upon the polished silver smoking-service, and the yellow cover of the French novel that lay near; it brought out sensual glints and gleams in the many large pictures, and I thought that Iridé's sombre eyes shone from her portrait and watched me as I came to the door of the dressing-room.

Here there was a nightlight burning, and here for the first time I hesitated, for a new feeling began to stir in me, or rather I should say to overpower my will, and take possession of me. I felt as though my intention was being swept forward towards an affinity yet more powerful. No tinge of mercy, no shade of gentler feeling made itself felt, and if such a thing could have happened I could not have given it rein. I was anxious to go into the next room and do that which I had come to do; and yet, because a stronger will than my own seemed at work within me, I held back, and would fain have gained a moment's pause.

The atmosphere was warm from a hidden stove in the corner, and the nightlight shone upon the bright brass fittings of a recently emptied bath whence came the scent of the heavily perfumed soap which the Jew, with true Oriental taste, always used; the carpet was soft and deep as the thickest moss; my feet sank into it at every step, as, mastering the strange emotion which threatened to enervate me, I crept stealthily forward. There was no door between this room and the next, only an entrance, closed with a heavy *portière*, and holding this aside I slipped round its folds and peered forward. The bed was to my left, its head, with costly curtains, against the wall, the foot towards the centre of the room. The white quilt was disordered by the sleeper, and by the faint rays of a nightlight cunningly contrived to cast no glare, I thought it was brodered with great dark arabesques. I looked at the pillow, still without advancing, and saw the thick mass of dyed black hair that Lazarich wore, but to that side of the bed I would not steal; my enemy should know me before he died. I was no assassin to stab in a man's back. I would meet him face to face; I would say: "I am here, I, the man you ruined; look at me while you are dying; look your fill, while I watch my reward."

I walked round the foot of the bed and came forward to the other side. I was quite calm now, not a nerve fluttered. The curtains cast a deep shade over the Jew's face, so that I did not see his features distinctly, but could only make out that his head was thrown back and his coarse chin and heavy wrinkled throat thrust upwards. In that tense moment I fancied the curtain moved, and for an infinitesimal space I paused and looked sharply round. There was nothing, however, and making ready the poignard in my right hand I laid my left upon the

sleeper's shoulder, in order to rouse him.

As I did so a thrill of surprised horror seized me at the contact, an amazing repulsion, an apprehension; the touch impressed me with a strange inertness and irresponsiveness, and I stooped nearer towards the huddled form, the upturned face. Would the eyes never open? Would no sound come from those silent lips?

The next second I gave a stifled shriek of terror,—a hand grasped my arm, the curtain was flung aside, and once more for the last time I and my familiar came face to face. The angular form, in its spare black clothing, stood beside me; the lean yellow fingers clutched my sleeve; the cavernous eyes blazed out of their depths into my very soul.

"Too late!" cried the maniac, with an exultant scream that must have rung through the house. "Too late! I waited, I set all the doors open for you, but you never came. I had thought we should do it together; but the man stirred and moaned in his sleep and I feared he might wake, so I did it! His blood was mine at last! See!" and she dashed away the drapery that shaded the pillow.

Again that strange sense of possession by a stronger will came over me, and my eyes, following the line of her outstretched finger, looked at her handiwork in the full light of the unveiled lamp. The dark embroidery on the white quilt was blood; it was everywhere; its deadly soakage had worked even in the few moments since I had entered the room; its ghastly creeping had a foul semblance of life. Moses Lazarich lay dead before me,—dead, with his stiff white face a mask of pain and terror, dead,—and my useless poignard slipped from my hand to the ground.

"Look, look!" shrieked the woman, clapping her hands; "Look!"

Then I heard no more, saw no more. I struck fiercely at the terrible creature beside me, I felt myself thrust her away, then blindness and deafness came over me, and a whirling darkness swallowed me,—I felt myself sinking—sinking—

## CHAPTER XVII.

I WILL not tax the patience of the reader with any precise recital of what followed during the few weeks immediately succeeding the death of Moses Lazarich. I was tried for murder of course, as, although the real criminal laid unhesitating claim to the deed, yet she was considered too obviously insane to be relied on, and was at first regarded as my tool and accomplice. It might have gone hard with me but for a singular circumstance. The reader will remember that on my way to the Corsia Giulietta on the night of the crime I stopped for a moment to befriend a stray kitten. It belonged to the *portinaio* of the house in whose doorway I had paused, and its master, having heard its mewing, was on his way to let it in when I planted myself on the threshold. The door was of the kind frequently found in Soloporto, which possesses a small square peep-hole, grated and closing inside with a tiny shutter. On opening this the visitor can easily be inspected before admission; and the *portinaio*, hearing someone just outside, hid his candle and took a good look at me through the little grating. A street-lamp close by cast a full light on my face, and the man decided to wait till I chose to pass on before opening the door to let in his cat. To his surprise he saw me take up the little animal and walk away with it, buttoned inside my coat. Barely half an hour after, the nearest doctor to Lazarich's abode was hastily

summoned by a policeman, and the medical man chanced to live in the same house whence I had taken the kitten. The *portinaio* naturally accompanied the doctor in order to see what might be seen, and under plea of escort was admitted to the entry of the house in the Corsia Giulietta, at the door of which a policeman was already on guard. The first thing he saw was his own stray kitten, and putting this and that together he told the guard what he knew. All these circumstances might have only served to confirm my guilt, but for the fact that the doctor pronounced life to have been quite extinct for at least an hour, or more probably two. The short half hour which the *portinaio* swore was all that had elapsed since I had taken away his kitten, rendered my complicity in the deed so extremely doubtful that Pepe Romagno was presently discharged, a free man. I was literally guilty of nothing. Not of burglariously entering another man's house, since I was one of Mancini's servants, and in that capacity provided with pass-keys, and even with a special permit of absence, which was found upon me and which had barely expired. I was not guilty of attempted murder either, since you cannot either intend, or attempt to murder a corpse.

How the real criminal found her way into the house was, and will always remain, a mystery. Though she refused to give any reason for her action she freely confessed that she had for years watched and waited for an opportunity to kill Moses Lazarich, and entered with all a lunatic's baleful glee into the details of her finally successful attempt upon his life; but upon the means whereby she had gained access to the house and to its master's private rooms she was obstinately silent, and the point was never cleared up.

Thanks to Thomas I was furnished with the best legal aid procurable. The young man had, as I had foreseen, come flying back to St. Servolo immediately on receipt of my telegram, and after a rapturous interview with Iridé had made his way to the village to see Padre Cristoffero, whom he found overwhelmed with distress at the news of my crime, which had just reached him in the columns of a Soloporto paper. Priest and lover at once resolved that Iridé should never know of my supposed share in her father's death, the nature of which was not broken to her for some days afterwards, when she had been placed by Thomas, with old Anna as duenna for the journey, once more under the protection of Zia Bianca at Ancona. My trial, with that of Isabel, as the mad woman called herself (she resolutely declined to give any other name), was scarcely over when I fell ill of brain-fever, or something very like it, and lay at death's door for many weeks.

When I look back at those weeks, which seemed to me much more like centuries, I begin to realise more clearly that a very finite division of the span of life is represented by Time, as mankind understands it. In my fever and delirium I lived once again all those long, weary, bitter years of toil and hardship, of keen longing and baffled search, of changeless hate and unflinching courage; all manner of trivialities, of unremembered nothings came back to my memory that for years past had taken no account of them. Every detail of my existence as Pepe Romagno was lived over again by me within some six short weeks. Nearly twenty years in forty days! No wonder that when I woke once more to present things I was aged and worn and feeble.

I told Padre Cristoffero all the story of my life in so far as it con-

cerned Lazarich, not, I think, because of any religious tendencies in myself, nor because of any special faith in the power of the priest, or of his brethren, to awaken such within my heathen bosom. I did it because there is much moral truth in the saying that "open confession is good"; moreover, I fancy that Padre Cristoffero during my illness, when his kindly ministrations were unceasing, must have guessed at any rate something of the truth from my ravings; besides he was a gentle, humble, righteous and merciful man, and contact with such is always good, even for those who, like myself, see by the light of another's faith and not of their own.

I spent many weeks up at St. Servolo when I was convalescent, and gradually fell into my old ways of cobbling and tailoring. My benevolent host used to beam with pleasure at the, to him, magical transformation of old garments and shoes into new, or at any rate wearable ones; and something like peace of mind came over me once more as I sat at work looking out over the barren wilderness, where the lithe little lizards crept among the stones, and the shrill crickets tried to scream each other down in rival concerts. Under the blue skies of spring I began to forget a little the angry winter sunset that had reddened my path to Soloporto on that stormy night when vengeance was snatched from my ready hand. Every morning the priest suggested as in former days that, as he was going to say mass, perhaps I should like to accompany him; and every morning I assented and we went together to the darksome grotto, where, though I did my best to fix my attention, I confess it sometimes wandered, and I thought of Iridé and our walk through the Bora together, and of how we had stumbled panting and weary down those self-same steps

and rested upon the very stones where I was kneeling. Memory wandered still further, and recalled all the details of our final rescue and haven in the Padre's house. I used to permit my recollections to travel on till they reached my own rest and sleep; but after that I checked them, for Padre Cristoffero, finding himself regretfully unable to change my views of certain past events, had strongly suggested the desirability of allowing myself to dwell upon them as little as possible. Time goes forward very quickly, and it is impossible that many more years of life can remain for me; but I am beginning to think that by perseverance I may, before I die, be able to feel relief, and not regret, that Moses Lazarich met his fate by another hand than mine.

Strange to say I have written this story (for his patience in perusing which a garrulous old man thanks the kindly reader) in the old Italian palace and garden whence the greed and cruelty of the Jew drove me so many years ago,—in fact at the time I adopted philosophy. Though I have now attained to that state, so desirable in the case of a nation, of having no history, and nothing interesting left to tell about myself, yet as concerns others perhaps it is well that I should add a few words.

Mrs. Willoughby came to Ancona a few months after Baron Mancini's death, to be present at the marriage of her son and lovely dark-eyed Iridé, who, strange to say (for I should hardly have predicted it myself), got on admirably with her mother-in-law. The honeymoon, which lasted nearly a year, was spent in England, whence at last Thomas wrote to beg my help in inspecting and reporting upon the Campagna Gertone, which his wife had inherited among other property from her father, and where she had expressed a wish to live, for at any



rate a part of every year. Would I go to this place and see if it was in habitable condition, and take steps to have it prepared for the arrival of his wife and himself, which would take place as soon as I reported things ready?

Truth is stranger than fiction; and I confess that, philosopher as I am, I walked about my own old gardens and went in and out of empty chambers full of my youth's memories, feeling as if I were in a dream. The early summer twilight fell over the deserted rooms and the weed-grown walks, the choked fountains and the mossy statues, till to me at least they were all as I had last remembered them. Every little detail came clearly back again as I mused alone; twenty years of my life rolled away, and I almost felt my limbs strengthen and my blood run faster as the ghosts of my vanished youth crowded thickly round me. I heard the light ripple of songs long silent; I saw the flash of eyes long closed in death; I clasped warm hands that must now be cold; I watched in the dry fountain the gleam of the silver water tossed and falling in the moonlight, and the heavy scent of the magnolias recalled with yet more magical clearness many a detail of my long-hushed revellings. I was even conscious that my respectable, philosophical, present self yearned with reprehensible affection over the splendid season when the sober delights, the frugal satisfactions of philosophy were all unknown; and feeling such reflections undesirable, I retired to rest.

The next few weeks I spent in a most delightful manner, liberally dispensing Thomas's money in paying good workmen who, under my directions, rapidly restored much of its past beauty to the Campagna Gertone. I even carried out one or two little

improvements, planned when I was the owner of the place and was more rich than philosophical, improvements which both Thomas and his wife appreciated so highly that they begged me as a personal favour to accept the position of steward in charge of everything, with a house of my own in the grounds, and a seat at their table whenever I was pleased to take it. There seemed nothing unphilosophical about accepting this offer, and now I live, and hope to die, where I nurtured the brilliant dreams of my earlier days. Philosophy is really a splendid thing! I know not what my youth had not intended to achieve in one way or another, and here I am, an old man,—but a philosophical, mind you—quite content to be steward to the Englishman who married my enemy's daughter, quite content to see others occupying my place, quite content to be busy planning a new rosary, or a plantation, or superintending the re-tiling of the tool-house, or the fixing of an extra row of bee-boxes. Nay more, I insist (in spite of Iride's protestations) upon mending many pairs of little boots and shoes, for Thomas has a large family, and I desire to make some little return for the generous income which he and his wife would be sadly hurt if I refused.

Padre Cristoffero has left his eyrie at St. Servolo and, thanks to Thomas Willoughby's interest, has now the spiritual charge of the little village here. He often comes up to the Campagna Gertone, and no more welcome visitor ever enters its gates. He is an immense favourite with the children, who have much love but not the slightest respect for him, and with their father and mother at whose wedding he officiated; while Pepe Romagno, the steward, listens to the Padre's gentle admonitions and faithful little sermons with that grateful

and affectionate patience wherewith philosophy has endowed him.

On one or two occasions I have been somewhat tempted to tell Thomas Willoughby of my kinship, as for instance one evening when during a stroll he suddenly began to talk about the Campagna Gertone. "I wonder where it got the name?" he said. "It is not one I have ever heard in this part of the country."

"It once belonged to a man called Egerton," I answered, taken off my guard, "and the villagers softened the name into Gertone."

Thomas looked at me curiously, evidently a little startled. "How did you know that?" he asked. "Were you ever here before?"

"I used to know the man Egerton slightly many years ago," I said, for really I felt that in my prime my own knowledge of myself had been very superficial indeed.

"I have heard my mother speak of a cousin of hers named Egerton who ran away to Italy when he was quite young," said Thomas with some animation. "I wonder if by any chance he ever had this place. It would be an odd coincidence. What was the Egerton like that you knew?"

"It is so many years ago," I answered steadily, "that I cannot tell you much. I remember, however, that he was rich and reckless, and exceedingly prone to amusing himself; he was a handsome man too in his way, and not so fond of England as—Wakefield, for example." I forgot to say that the faithful Wakefield, now rather more reconciled to life abroad, is also an inhabitant of the Campagna Gertone.

Thomas laughed. "Wakefield is a regular Briton certainly," he said, "and I fancy it is only his attachment to me personally that keeps him out here; he gets on very well on the whole, though I really think he is

a bit jealous of Iridé. Let us take a turn through the orchard and look at those new peach-standards, and by the way, I wish you would let me know if you can hear anything about this man Egerton who was once here."

I have never been able to supply Thomas with any information on this point, for people of my age and experience never do anything they can help to disturb a satisfactory state of things. My day and generation are of course fast passing away, and very likely the younger and more enterprising beings who are now beginning to inhabit the earth may think that philosophy has after all yielded but a poor return for my devotion. To begin, failing that guide, with almost every brilliant worldly possibility open to you, and to end an unknown philosopher in an obscure Italian *campagna*, content to plant trees and mend shoes, seems truly somewhat of a fall; yet I, who have drunk Life's cup from its sweet and brimming froth to its bitter dregs, have found in the fragrant quiet of this ordered garden an enduring satisfaction which all the glitter of my golden youth could not bestow. To be amply conscious of the limit of sufficiency, to chew the bitter-sweet herb of experience with its rough and wholesome flavour, to take each day's sun and wind and rain as Heaven's own gifts and not as matters of course, to feel, when Nature binds the brow with the poppied crown of sleep, that it is a Heaven-sent balm and not a familiar phenomenon,—these things are for the occupation and the solace of such as I. I am certain of the unchanging regard of those I serve; I know the laughter and love of little children; I feel that Life's turmoil lies far behind me, and the rest of Death close in front,—and the truth and the beauty of these things, my friends, hath philosophy taught to Pepe Romagno.

THE END.

## AN AMERICAN HISTORIAN OF THE BRITISH NAVY.

IN the course of his patriotic controversies with American writers on the war of 1812, the naval historian (or, to be strictly accurate, chronicler) James had occasion to fall upon one D. B. Warden, "late Consul of the United States at Paris." Mr. Warden, who appears to have been an American of the order of John Paul Jefferson Jones, "titularly attached to the American Embassy and correspondent of THE NEW YORK DEMAGOGUE," had written a patriotic book on the sea-affairs of the United States, and had contrived to get it published in Edinburgh. James wrote to prove that it was grossly unfair, and while doing so he pointedly asked Warden, what answer would have been given to him, James, if he had offered a corresponding piece of work to an American publisher. The question might perhaps have been put with more justice to Constable who had brought out Warden's work in the way of trade, but it was not an idle inquiry. We revive the memory of this minor passage in an ancient dispute because the case has arisen for putting a very similar question, and that in connection with the writing of our naval history, and this very same war of 1812.

There has just appeared the second volume of what is designed to be a monumental history of the Royal Navy and indeed of even more than this great subject, for the work includes discovery.<sup>1</sup> Following a fashion rather prevalent of late years, though

almost incompatible with the production of literature, it is the work of a society of gentlemen, whose chief and director is Mr. Laird Clowes. In the list of his assistants appear the names of Captain Mahan and Mr. Theodore Roosevelt. Now we profess a genuine respect for Captain Mahan, and we have no prejudice against Mr. Roosevelt. The first has done solid work of general interest, and the second is the author of a good American account of the war of 1812.<sup>1</sup> But what, we ask, are they doing in a list of the authors of a history of our Royal Navy, and what in particular is Mr. Roosevelt doing there as the writer of yet another record of the struggle which he has described already? Captain Mahan takes the great operations of the naval wars in a part of the eighteenth century in which his country had no share. No doubt he will repeat the substance of his previous works acceptably enough, and as an impartial student. Yet it is surely somewhat strange that we should go even to him, to write for us on the achievements of our fathers, while it is neither more nor less than monstrous that recourse should have been had to Mr. Roosevelt. Captain Cesareo Duro has written well of the Armada; it would no doubt be possible to find Dutchmen who have things worth hearing to tell us about the wars of the seventeenth century; while France has students

<sup>1</sup> THE ROYAL NAVY FROM THE EARLIEST TIMES TO THE PRESENT; by William Laird Clowes. Vols. i.-ii. London, 1897-8.

<sup>1</sup> THE NAVAL WAR OF 1812, OR THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES' NAVY DURING THE LAST WAR WITH GREAT BRITAIN; by Theodore Roosevelt. New York, 1882.

very capable of doing capital studies of the sea-fighting of the eighteenth. But a nation which has any self-respect writes its own history. It reads foreigners on the subject, when they happen to be competent, with profit, but it does not apply to them. No doubt there are reasons sufficiently indicated by the words *copyright* and *American market* which make the presence of these names among the authors of a history of the Royal Navy quite intelligible. Nothing indeed is easier to understand from the publisher's point of view. But there is the reader's point of view also, and when we look at the prospect of seeing Mr. Theodore Roosevelt writing on the war of 1812 in a national history of the Royal Navy, we perceive good reasons why Englishmen should decide to leave the publisher severely to that American market which he has in contemplation.

This would be the case even if Mr. Roosevelt were as impartial as it is possible for human nature to be when the glories of one's own country are concerned, that is, if he told the tale with rigid fairness as to the facts, though with a pardonable, or, let us say, with a commendable desire to do his best for his own side. By all means let every man stand firm for his own people, and his father's house. When Don Cesareo Duro shows how much valour, how much even of skill, wasted and misapplied but real, there was among our enemy,

When that great fleet invincible against  
us bore in vain,

The richest spoils of Mexico, the  
stoutest hearts of Spain,

we can applaud, for after all it is to our glory that we triumphed over no mean enemy. When Admiral Jurien de la Gravière reminds us how much the French Revolution did to make the victories of Nelson possible, he

is doing more than excuse the defeats of his country. He is rendering us a service in pointing out what we will do well to remember, namely, that we must not rely on finding our old enemy dislocated by social and political revolution when we meet him again, and must take care to be the better ourselves for that very reason. Yet their place is to write for Spain, and for France, and though it is our part to study them, they are not to speak for us. Neither ought Mr. Roosevelt, be his ability and impartiality what they may. The ability we do not dispute; but concerning his impartiality there is something to be said which ought to give Englishmen a particular, as well as general, reason for protesting against being called upon to go to him for their naval history.

As we wish to be quite fair to Mr. Roosevelt, we begin by acknowledging that he compares very favourably both in style and in spirit with many of his countrymen. He very rarely shows any sign of the baser kind of American vulgarity, or the more stupid sort of American ignorance. Once, in the course of a comparison between the American (the product, it seems, of freer institutions) and the British sailor, he bursts out with a reference to "the Britain of the drunken Prince Regent and his dotard father." This use of the madness of George the Third belongs to the lowest order of Yankee controversy in point of taste. The silliness of the phrase is glaring when we remember that the Britain of this time was the Britain of Pitt, and the Marquess Wellesley, of Nelson and Wellington, of Scott, Shelley and Byron, of Sir William Hamilton and of Bentham, and of innumerable men of the second rank with whom the best of America would not bear comparison. Mr. Roosevelt can hardly be so ignorant as never to have heard

of these men. We are forced to conclude that one of two things must be true,—either that he is capable of flattering the underbred and provincial self-consciousness of the more foolish among his countrymen, or that his reasoning powers are far from strong. A little thought would have led him to doubt the virtue of those “freer institutions” which he considers as capable of accounting for the superiority of the Yankee sailor. It is strange at least that their wonder-working powers should have stopped with him. Freer institutions failed to produce either statesmen or men of letters, and left the free Yankee militiamen liable to behave with much cowardice, as Mr. Roosevelt himself has to confess. Yet this is a nearly solitary example of the John Paul Jefferson Jones tone. As a rule our author's style is commendably sober. He not only abstains from the “spread-eagle” manner, but quotes a rather fine example from Niles for purposes of derision. Niles, he tells us, describes “The Immortal Rodgers, baulked of his natural prey, the British, as ‘soaring like the bold bald eagle of his native land’ seeking whom he might devour.” We do not know that his book gains in readability by this sobriety, for the Pogram Defiance manner is, at least for a few pages, irresistibly delectable to every man who has been endowed with the blessed sense of the ridiculous. Yet we cannot blame Mr. Roosevelt for not being absurd for our amusement. Then, too, there is a constant and, as we fully allow, praiseworthy, effort to maintain at least the appearance of impartiality. Mr. Roosevelt does not deny that the American ships were generally heavier than the English, and he can bring himself, without great apparent effort, to allow that under favourable circumstances the British seamen might be

made about as good as the Yankee, which, considering that the second started with the advantage of those “freer institutions,” is obviously much to our credit. It might even be tortured into a confession of our greater natural aptitude for the sea. He gives high praise to individual captains, to Broke of the Shannon, to Manners of the Reindeer, and to Hillyar of the Phœbe. It is a small matter, but one not unworthy of notice, by the way, that Mr. Roosevelt habitually calls this officer Hilyar. We would not mark so small a point if he did not go out of his way to ask, in a footnote, why the British habitually speak of van Tromp. It is an excusable slip as one could easily explain,—a very much smaller error than to talk continually of “Lord Howard Douglass” as Mr. Roosevelt does, when he ought to say Sir Howard Douglas. These be tithings of mint and anise, and not the weightier matters of the law; yet it is permissible to insist on them as against the Pharisee who himself thinks them important.

On the whole we may allow that Mr. Roosevelt is relatively fair,—more fair not only than his own countrymen, but than our own James, who could barely mention an American without sneers and insinuations in the most acrid tone of the slashing reviewer. This second superiority is creditable, but not so very wonderful. James wrote under the provocation of the insolent bluster of American papers, to which was afterwards added foul personal abuse of himself. A cooler contempt for the polemics of the gutter would have become him better; but the man was human, and lived in a time when controversies were habitually savage. Mr. Roosevelt had no such provocation, and so far from being abused for his patriotic version of the story, he has been generally accepted among us

as fair, and is even asked to write history for Englishmen. The acceptance he has gained here is not surprising, since it is a rather rare experience with us to find an American who takes the trouble to be decently polite to "the British;" and yet the impartiality of Mr. Roosevelt, as we propose to show, is very much akin to the specious fairness of the skilful barrister who knows that a little safe show of justice tells with the jury.

Leaving aside for the moment what may be called questions of detail, relative to size and strength of ships, weight of armament, and so forth, which though important are subordinate, Mr. Roosevelt's history is vitiated all through by his steady determination to ignore one most essential consideration which ought never to be forgotten by a writer who aims at giving a fair account of this war of 1812. He insists much on the flattering contrast presented by the "thousand" British warships, and the little handful of American frigates and sloops. The *thousand* is of course rhetoric. The total number of cruising vessels of the Royal Navy for 1812 was five hundred and eighty-five, including gunboats, fireships, and cutters. By adding hospital-ships, receiving-ships, and the like, a grand total of six hundred and twenty-one vessels may be reached. But we allow that a thousand is only used in an Oriental way as meaning a great number, and no doubt there were many more British than American ships, and they carried many more men. The number of seamen and marines voted for 1812 was one hundred and forty-five thousand. Nor can this figure be fairly estimated if it is allowed to stand alone. At the same time we had to find men for a merchant-shipping which had doubled during the war. We suspended the Navigation Laws, and encouraged the

employment of foreigners, but all these vessels had to carry apprentices of English birth and were largely manned by Englishmen. Meanwhile there were the armies in India and the Peninsula, the reserve troops at home, and the embodied militia to be provided out of a population of some eleven millions in Great Britain and four millions in Ireland. The total force under arms was four hundred and sixty thousand by land and sea, without including the local militia, who were not embodied, the volunteers, and the European regiments of the East India Company. Now a really fair writer with these figures before him, and noting, as he would do, that England had no regular system of conscription and was bound to find hands for a rapidly growing manufacturing industry, would ask himself how all these men were obtained, and how far it was possible to secure good crews for so many vessels out of a population of this size subject to so many peremptory calls. He would, if he reasoned accurately from the facts, be constrained to ask himself whether the very number of our commissioned ships was not in itself a cause of weakness,—whether, in fact, the obligation to have numerous fleets in every sea did not compel us to sacrifice the quality of our crews. Then he would ask himself whether any equivalent burden was laid upon the Americans. His estimate of the relative faculties of the combatants, and of the credit respectively due to them for the actions of the war, would be controlled by the answers he gave to these two questions.

Now there can be no sort of doubt that we had been compelled to sacrifice the quality of our crews, and that the Americans had not. It was only by having recourse to desperate make-shifts that we found crews for our ships at all, by accepting large num-



bers of landmen, by shipping a great proportion of boys, and even by drawing on the jails. In 1812 the power of Napoleon was still unbroken by the retreat from Russia ; even in the following year he made a vast display of force in northern Germany. Meanwhile he was building line-of-battle ships from the Scheldt round to Venice, and these we had to blockade. It may be that we over-estimated the danger, and did not take the best measures for our own protection. James is of opinion that we could safely have diminished the number of line-of-battle ships in the blockading fleets, and could then have been more exacting about the quality of our crews. As quality is always of more importance in war than quantity (as this very struggle of 1812 proves) he is probably right. But even if our policy was mistaken, the practical question remains where it was. We were compelled to procure numbers by taking inferior men. Our captains were always complaining of the bad composition of their crews. If one of them did contrive to get together a fine ship's company, he was always liable to see twenty or forty of his best men swept off by order of the admiral, who thought him "too well manned," and who was compelled to maintain a certain average of efficiency in his squadron. Nor was this all. The Admiralty, which thought that the real danger lay in the fleets which Napoleon was constantly increasing in his ports, always sent the best men to the blockading squadrons. In 1812 the flower of our seamen were with Strachan outside the Scheldt or with Pellew in the Mediterranean. We cannot say the Admiralty was wrong, since even the failure to win a complete victory in the North Sea would have done England more harm than fifty defeats on the ocean in sloop and frigate actions. Still the fact re-

mains that, while the blockading squadrons were well manned, captains who were ordered to distant seas were compelled to put up with what they could get.

A very striking example of this is to be found in the story of the *Java*. She was commissioned to carry out some officials and stores to India, and was manned, from the guardships, the jails, and by the boys of the Patriotic Society, so badly that Captain Lambert protested. He was told that, as he was going on a long voyage, he would have time to lick his crew into shape before he reached his destination. Unfortunately the *Java* fell in with the Constitution when only six weeks out, and was taken after a prolonged and gallant fight, in which the seamanship of Captain Lambert (who fell), and of his First-Lieutenant Chads, and the bravery of everybody, were as conspicuous as the badness of her gunnery. The question of the quality of the crew is so pressing in this case that Mr. Roosevelt is forced to give it some notice. He does so in a note, and after a fashion which is assuredly not candid. After quoting James as saying that the crew of the *Java* was "unusually bad," he cites Brenton's statement that it was "like the generality of our crews." Now this is as good an example as one could wish for, how not to quote. What Brenton really says is this : "She [the *Java*] was newly equipped with a crew composed of different portions of the men of other ships, and a sad mixture from the guardships at the Nore, and in Hamoaze ; such at the close of the war were the generality of our crews. She had but a small proportion of seamen, and nineteen of her men were away in a prize." Quotation of this kind is on a level with the text of the Puritan preacher in the venerable old story. He denounced female vanity

in the words "Top knot come down," and when it was pointed out to him that the words stand "let him who is upon the house-top, not come down," replied that all words of the Bible being equally inspired, the order in which they were taken was of no importance. Captain Brenton manifestly confirms James, and the average of which he was thinking was the average of an overtaxed navy fighting at a great disadvantage.

Mr. Roosevelt is of opinion that "It is worth while explaining the reason that such a crew was generally better than a French and worse than an American one." Most of us will agree with him, and will further see reason to regret that he has either not done what he thought worth doing, or has made a show of doing it by seeking the apparent explanation most agreeable to national vanity. Putting aside the comparison with the French, which would lead us far from our immediate subject, the comparison with America is easily made. Mr. Roosevelt dwells with gratification on the rapid development of her shipping during the wars due to her fortunate position as a neutral. Whether all the men required for this enlarged shipping, and afterwards drawn upon for the crews of her warships, were native-born Americans, and in how large a proportion they were naturalised Englishmen, are questions we shall not discuss at any length. No American, and certainly not Mr. Roosevelt, denies that they came in part from the latter source. This being so, it is hardly worth while to reopen the old debate as to how far the crews of the American warships were of English birth. In the first place we are not at all proud to think that Englishmen could be found who would fight against their native land. In the second place the truth is now beyond our reach. Mr. Roosevelt

argues that the crews were native Americans because they said they were; but men who were capable of fighting against their native country were equally capable of saying they were born at Salem, when as a matter of fact they had first seen the light in Wapping. The emigration and naturalisation are not disputed, and the probability that men who wished to escape being pressed into an English man-of-war would lie is great; and these things being thus we may be pardoned for doubting how far all the men pressed by our warships were native-born Americans, and for declining to take Mr. Roosevelt's word for it that the deserters from our warships found serving under the Stars and Stripes were all Yankees of the purest strain. For the rest it does not matter much. That the Yankee sailors were first-rate sailormen all competent witnesses allow. A crew formed of them would be a good crew.

Before, however, we allow him to talk of average American and British crews, we want to know how the respective averages were reached. Had America been fighting for her life during twenty years with an unscrupulous enemy of immense power at her very gates? Was she burdened with a great standing army? Had she to maintain squadrons in every sea? Was one field of the war so much more important to her that she sacrificed to it the quality of the forces employed in those less vital? Was it her inferior crews which she opposed to us? Unless all these questions are to be answered in the affirmative it is mere sophistry to talk of average American and British crews. Mr. Roosevelt, for obvious reasons, does not attempt to answer them in the affirmative. He takes the easier course of ignoring them altogether. The simple truth is that when the United States set about

forming a navy they decided with admirable sense that, since they could not have a great one, what they had should be good. They not only built their ships stronger, rate for rate, than those of other Powers, but they aimed at forming good crews, first by tempting the best men by high wages, and then by practising them at the guns continually. It is also the case that, after France was fairly beaten at Trafalgar, our officers became somewhat careless of gunnery. The enemy they expected to have to deal with was so inferior in this respect, that they turned their attention mainly to making seamen of their heterogeneous crews, and to what the Navy calls "spit and polish,"—the never-ending attempt to make their ships a model of smartness. The Americans reaped the due reward of their foresight, and we suffered for our mistake, but the causes of both were temporary. A historian of real impartiality would not ignore them. When we keep these facts in mind we are able to estimate the uncandid character of a practice of which Mr. Roosevelt is very fond. He insists, for example, that if the *Java* had been only six weeks in commission when she met the *Constitution*, the *Constitution* had been only three weeks in commission when she met the *Guerrière*. This, however, is only half the truth. To get the whole we have to learn how the crews were originally composed. If, as we have every reason to believe, the *Constitution* was manned by prime seamen who had mostly served in warships before, while the *Java* was manned by mere makeshift, as she undoubtedly was, then the comparison is grossly unfair. There is all the difference in the world between a crew new to the whole business of the sailor and man-of-war's man, and another which is only new to a par-

ticular ship. It were well to keep the distinction in mind when Mr. Roosevelt insists on the rawness of the crew of the *Chesapeake*. The great majority of them were already trained men. To sum up this part of the question; in the war of 1812 a few American warships of exceptional material strength, manned by the best of a large seafaring population, partly native, partly naturalised, were opposed to the less well-appointed vessels of our overworked navy, at a time when our military training had been unwisely allowed to fall rather behind-hand. In the few actions in which this was not the case,—in the fights between the *Pelican* and the *Argus*, the *Shannon* and the *Chesapeake*, the *Phœbe* and the *Essex*—the Americans were well beaten.

A similar determination to ignore a governing general consideration is found in Mr. Roosevelt's comparisons of the respective force of the ships engaged. We allow that he is incomparably more candid than his predecessors in America had been. He does not deny that his countrymen had a great superiority in the size of their ships, and the weight of their broadside. Far be it from us to say that the advantage was unfair. A country has a perfect right to every superiority it can gain by foresight and intelligent preparation, and it is childish for Englishmen to say, as we have known a countryman of ours do, that the Americans behaved after the manner of the disloyal duellist who fights with a concealed breastplate. This is mere nonsense. They went to open war, not to a duel, with a thicker breastplate, and after more practice with the sword, as they were perfectly entitled to do, and as the Elizabethan seamen had done against the Spaniard of the sixteenth century. Mr. Roosevelt, again quite fairly,

quotes this greater force of the American ships as a proof of the sagacity with which his country had gone about to form its navy. But for that very reason, if for no other, and there are others, he ought to estimate the superiority of the American ship at its full value. It may not in the opinion of foolish persons be patriotic to do so, but it is both wise and honest. A superiority of that sort is easily lost when a nation overlooks the need for it, and its opponents have learnt from experience. When you have won mainly by means of it, there is rashness in concealing the whole truth from your countrymen. We have no objection to giving America all the credit she deserves on this point, since we have learnt from experience, and have not the least intention of opposing *Guerrières* to *Constitutions* of any nation in the future, nor yet of neglecting our gunnery for "spit and polish," important as that is within rational limits. Therefore we propose to be more just to America than Mr. Roosevelt has been. Its rulers knew well what they were doing. In 1798 the Secretary at War stated the policy of the day in very good terms. "It appears," he said in a report, "that the first estimate rendered to Congress was for frigates of the common size and dimensions, rated at thirty-six and forty-four guns, and that the appropriations for the armament were founded upon this estimate. It also appears that, when their size and dimensions came to be maturely considered, due reference being had to the ships they might have to contend with, it was deemed proper so to alter their dimensions, without changing their rates, as to extend their sphere of utility as much as possible. It was expected, from this alteration, that they would possess in an eminent degree the advantage of sailing; that

separately they would be superior to any single European frigate of the usual dimensions; that if assailed by numbers they would be always able to lead ahead; that they could never be obliged to go into action but on their own terms, except in a calm; and that in heavy weather they would be capable of engaging double-decked ships."

This was the aim, and it was fully attained. To begin with, these ships were of heavier scantling than ours, that is, they had thicker sides, an immense advantage, of which Mr. Roosevelt takes no notice, or at best a notice which is very rare and casual, thrown in now and then, as if to guard against the objection of a possible critic without insisting on what the reader might not like to have brought forcibly to his notice. This use of something brief between brackets and in a note is well known to the controversialist, but it is more artful than candid. Things should be stated with a prominence proportionate to their relative importance. Now it is quite obvious that a vessel which is twenty inches thick (as the heavy American ships were) is less easy to pierce than another which is only fifteen. When in addition to this she carries heavier guns,—24-pounders to 18-pounders was the difference between the *Constitution* and the *Guerrière* and *Java*—it is, or ought to be, equally obvious that the passive power of resistance of the larger vessel must be taken in with her powers of active offence when estimating her superiority. It is not enough to take broadside weight and tonnage alone into account; allowance must be made for respective vulnerability. Would it be fair when describing an action between an armoured and an unarmoured ship, to consider only their displacement and the number of their guns? Armour gives one the greater

power of resisting blows, the greater chance of lasting; and, as between wooden ships, greater thickness of side is of the nature of armour. Then there is another detail of no small importance to be taken into account in a fair estimation of the ships. In our quotation from the Secretary at War's statement it will be seen that the fine American frigates were expected to be able to engage a double, or two-decked ship in heavy weather. What this means is that the frigate carried her guns so high that she could fight them when the liner could not run the risk of opening her lower-deck ports. In such circumstances as this it was that Pellew, when captain of the *Indefatigable*, was able, with the help of another frigate, to drive the *Droits de l'Homme* ashore. Yet on that occasion the *Indefatigable's* men were up to their waists in water on her gun-deck. If she had been opposed to another frigate which carried her guns at from eight to ten feet above the water line, as the American forty-fours did, she would have been at a great disadvantage. Now this was precisely the case as between the *Constitution* and our *Guerrière* and *Java*. Putting it all together then, the lesser liability of the American to be pierced, his heavier armament, and his greater freedom in the use of his weapons, we should expect to find that the damage he inflicted was far greater than that which he suffered, and was in fact on the square, or even the cube of the difference in tonnage and weight of guns. The mere fact that he could conveniently fire as his side was going down, while the vessel which carried her guns nearer the water was sorely tempted, or even forced, to fire as the side was going up, or when the ship was on the crest of the wave, would make an immense

difference. The fire of the larger ship would tend to hit the hull, while the fire of the smaller would have a constant tendency to fly high, into the enemy's rigging or even over it. Mr. Roosevelt takes no notice of this. He looks to tonnage and broadside weight of fire alone, which, even if they were always given with rigid accuracy, would be misleading because insufficient tests.

Such as they are, however, Mr. Roosevelt handles them much as he does his quotation from Brenton. We have no intention to go through all his figures of the tonnage, which have been fully discussed by Mr. H. Y. Powell in an appendix to his edition of James's book, published in 1886. It is enough merely to ask why he put the *Guerrière* at 1,332 tons? When she was taken by the *Blanche* in 1806 her measurement was made by us to give 1,092 tons. That is the figure given by James when he records her capture by us, and repeated when he describes her engagement with the *Constitution*. By what mysterious process does 1,092 become 1,338? It was not by American measurement which made tonnage less than ours. Mr. Roosevelt nowhere explains. He does once say that he wishes he had better authority than James on the matter of the tonnage of British ships, and then, without going into details at all, rides off on a succession of quotations all going to show, not that the English historian was inaccurate in such matters, but that he said rude things about certain American naval officers, and had indeed a great loathing of Yankees in general. But this is not very creditable to Mr. Roosevelt's candour. There is no need to tie his faith to James. Apart from the official lists, such well-known authorities on ship-building as Knowles and Fincham will give him our measure-

ments and tonnage. Besides, the *Guerrière* was a French-built ship and her size can be got from her first masters. Mr. Powell got it, and it confirms James. Of course one can quite understand that it sounds better to tell how an American frigate of 1,576 tons took an English frigate of 1,338 than it does to give the numbers as 1,576 and 1,092 respectively. But then that is not what can be called a fair and impartial way of writing history. With the broadside weight of fire Mr. Roosevelt takes a different course. He deducts seven per cent. from the weight of the American broadsides, because certain American shot were found to be to that extent inferior to English of the same rate in specific gravity, owing to inferior casting. Yet in one place he allows that this would be of little importance at close quarters, since the damage done by a shot will be in proportion to its diameter, not to its specific gravity, except at long range. James had said as much before, and it is odd that Mr. Roosevelt should agree with him, for he devotes a note to remarking that this proposition of the English writer's, if "carried out logically would lead to some astonishing results." The result of Mr. Roosevelt's proposition, whether the carrying out is logical or not, is that by exaggerating the tonnage of the English, and making

deductions from the broadsides of the Americans, he manages to represent the two as being more on an equality than they really were. One would like also to have rather better evidence to prove that the experiments were exhaustive.

It would be easy to go on multiplying examples, but it is not necessary. As Mr. Roosevelt deals with the *Guerrière* so he deals with the *Java* and the *Macedonian*, and as he treats the frigates so he treats the brigs. It is always the same story of additions to our tonnage and deductions from their broadside. But we have not the least wish in the world to quarrel with Mr. Roosevelt. On the contrary we cheerfully allow that his book contains much useful information and many shrewd remarks, that it is by comparison fair, and is nearly always free from the uneasy self-assertion and underbred measuring of themselves with others which is an unpleasant feature of much American writing. Our objection is not to Mr. Roosevelt as a writer for Americans and in America; it is to his appearance in the list of contributors to a history of the Royal Navy, and, following the example of a great writer, we hereby firmly declare that no portion of our small floating capital shall be embarked in the business so long as this continues to be the case.



## ANTHONY HAMILTON.

ONE cannot exactly class the *MEMOIRES DE GRAMMONT* among the popular books of the world. Perhaps it would be better to say with Gibbon that it is a favourite work with all persons who have any pretension to taste; for the truth is that the general public, who do not care greatly for old memoirs and who do not appreciate that exquisite literary flavour which is its distinction among all similar chronicles, have no very profound interest in Grammont or his biographer. There are no doubt also many genuine lovers of literature who are so much shocked by Hamilton's levity and lack of moral indignation, that they exclude him from the list of their familiar acquaintances on the shelves. It is a pity when this happens. Hamilton accepted the code of his day without comment; but in so far as his own behaviour was concerned, we have no report of him that does not show him as a loyal and courageous gentleman, tolerant indeed of the shortcomings of others but not in himself an offender. He may have been loose in morals, but if he was, he is not the braggart of his own vices, and no one else has been at the pains to record them. And though it is a vice to acquiesce easily in the immoralities of our neighbours, Hamilton, when he seems most acquiescent, often puts a sting of irony even into his praise. Indeed this subject could not have been handled with decency unless ironically, in so far as it is a biography. The Count was in no way a heroic figure, and his biographer does not pose him for a hero. He cheated at cards, and he

was a coward; yet Hamilton tells you of his indiscretions and lapses with so easy and irresponsible an air that you are bound to take them as a very good joke. So skilful indeed is the handling that Grammont has come down through the generations with his grand air unaltered, his impudence unabashed, and his wit in all probability considerably embellished; and we know ten times as much about him as about the man to whom he owes this curious immortality. Yet of the two men Hamilton was incomparably the abler, and not the less well born: he had shown courage and capacity in military and civil employment; but the world took him at his own valuation, and he shone merely with a lustre reflected from the engaging reprobate whose panegyrist he had constituted himself. Horace Walpole flies into a perfect ecstasy when he discovers Grammont's picture; one does not trace in him any such enthusiasm for the writer of his favourite book. The aim of this article is to redress in some measure this injustice and make the figure of Hamilton a little more distinct. He is a curious and by no means unimportant personage, whose apparent effeminacy is partly the result of circumstances, and partly nothing more than a pose.

Anthony Hamilton was by birth-place an Irishman, by blood half Irish and half Scotch. His father was Sir George Hamilton, younger son of the first Earl of Abercorn. Anthony was the third son. His mother was sister to the first Duke of Ormond, and under Charles the Second both An-

thony and his brother George were continually at the Duke of Ormond's house. The date of Anthony's birth is uncertain; but in 1651, when Sir George Hamilton was forced to leave Roscrea for France, he was aged somewhere between five and ten. At all events English was the first tongue that he learned to speak, and he learned to speak it with a brogue. He was one of six brothers, of whom the eldest James and another, Thomas, seem to have been Protestants, since they were employed in the English navy and army respectively, when Romanists were prohibited from serving. James Hamilton was killed in action against the Dutch in 1673. Anthony was a Roman Catholic, like his father, and with his three other brothers he entered the army of Louis the Fourteenth. At the Restoration the Hamiltons returned with the King; but the Parliament's legislation precluded the Catholics from employment, and Anthony at all events was inactive for some time at Court. His brother George, however, obtained permission from the King to levy secretly a regiment of fifteen hundred men in Ireland for the French service. Whether Anthony accompanied him to France or no cannot be told. But in 1671, the year when this regiment was raised, he was certainly in Ireland as is proved by a passage in the State Papers which has hitherto escaped the notice of biographers. On the night of May 19th a great fire broke out in Dublin Castle. The whole storehouse with its supply of arms was burned to the ground, and there was a hard struggle to keep the fire from spreading. To this end it was necessary to blow up some buildings adjoining, and the only powder available was in two or three barrels in the burning storehouse. "Lord John Butler" says the writer, "made himself useful, for with Mr. Anthony

Hamilton he rashly rushed in, brought out one of the barrels, notwithstanding the fire, and put it under the other building that was to be blown up." Beyond the record of this gallant action nothing is known of Hamilton during the reign of Charles, except what we can gather from the Memoirs. That indeed is little or nothing. They deal with these years 1662-1670, and terminate with Grammont's marriage to Miss Hamilton. If Anthony was born in 1646, he must have been a very young man when the scenes which he describes so brilliantly were passing. But there can be no doubt that he assisted at them; though he pretends to be merely Grammont's mouthpiece, the description is obviously his own; and in one famous episode of the period, which the Memoirs significantly omit, he was a chief actor. Grammont, who came to the English Court because he was banished from that of France, had at last obtained from Louis the Fourteenth the recall which he had so long desired, and instantly set out for Paris. George and Anthony Hamilton heard of his departure and rode after him hot-foot. At Dover they came up with him, and with a civility which one cannot sufficiently admire, assured him of their respect and explained that they had taken the journey to enquire if he had forgotten nothing. "Ah," said the Count, "true; I have forgotten to marry your sister;" back accordingly he went with them, and was duly married to Miss Elizabeth Hamilton. Her praises are eloquently written in the Memoirs, and her portrait hangs in the National Portrait Gallery, among the other flaccid and exuberant ladies of that time, whose counterfeit presentments compare so ill with Hamilton's attractive category of their fascinations.

With the reign of James came a more hopeful season for Catholics.

Anthony Hamilton took service in the Irish army and obtained a colonelcy. He was made a Privy Councillor on Lord Clarendon's strong recommendation, and subsequently promoted to be governor of Limerick. When the war broke out, he may have had chances of winning distinction, but we only hear of him in bad luck. He led a regiment of dragoons at Newton Butler, shared in the discreditable rout and was severely wounded; a galling experience. His brothers were not more fortunate. John was killed at Aughrim, and Richard, after accepting a mission from William, went over to James; a piece of bad faith not to be redeemed by the gallantry which he displayed at the Boyne. After the downfall of James's hopes, Anthony followed his sovereign to Saint Germain, where he seems to have spent the rest of his life an impoverished exile at a court which was itself dependent on charity. It was in these circumstances that he took to literature, being then over forty years old.

Literature, or at all events literary trifling, was very much the fashion in those days. Ladies and gentlemen corresponded with each other in terms of mythological compliment, and there was an enormous manufacture of epigrammatic verse. Hamilton complains bitterly of the fiend *Impromptu*, in whose presence he declared himself helpless. However, when he was given time he could produce the desired frivolities with the lightest of pens, and we have masses of them left to us. These verses, written in his own name, or (quite as often) on behalf of some fair lady or less gifted courtier, are now somewhat unreadable, and most deservedly forgotten, except the ingenious compliment beginning "*Celle qu'adore mon cœur n'est ni brune ni blonde.*" As for his letters, they are enough to make those who care for

old letters gnash their teeth in sheer rage. If ever a man was born to be a letter-writer and chronicle with an easy gossiping pen the daily life of his surroundings, that man was the author of the *MEMOIRES DE GRAMMONT*. Yet the imbecile fashion of the day demanded that, instead of telling us those little personal details which make the past alive for us, he should relate how *Phœbus Apollo* or the *Muses* appeared to him and the flattering remarks which they dictated for the benefit of his correspondent. Perhaps the most surprising example is an epistle from *Seaux*, July 1st, 1705, to *M. de Mimure*, then in the army which was opposing *Marlborough* in the Netherlands. One may quote the beginning to serve as an example of Hamilton's ingeniously rhymed badinage.

Mimure, qui dans la carrière,  
Où vous ont engagé l'honneur et le devoir,  
D'une constance singulière  
Brave du matin jusqu'au soir  
La mort, la crotte, ou la poussière :  
Vous qu'il fait souvent si beau voir,  
Dans l'oubli de toute glacière,  
Appaiser votre soif guerrière  
Sur le bord de quelque abreuvoir  
De quelque bourbeux rivière,  
Ou bien de quelque réservoir :  
Qui passez mainte nuit entière  
Sans vous coucher, sans vous asseoir,  
Sans avoir fermé la paupière,  
Et le matin sur la bruyère,  
Animé du flatteur espoir  
D'une rencontre meurtrière,  
Sans buffet, sans nappe, ou salière,  
Mangez bénignement un morceau de pain noir.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I append a rough rendering, keeping the proportions of rhymes and suggesting, so far as I could, the tone of the original; but it is done with the fist and Hamilton's scarcely shows a trace of the finger.

Mimure, who, loyal, firm and bold,  
Following fame and honour's high decrees,  
From morn to night your person hold  
In readiness, if fortune please,  
To meet your death or catch a cold;  
You, whom the rapt admirer sees

After about sixty or seventy lines, with only six or seven rhymes in the whole, Hamilton relapses into prose, but only to start fresh with a tirade against impromptus, to avoid which, he declares, he was driven into the woods for shelter. There he was accosted by three figures, a lady and two men, all strangely caparisoned. They explained that they were Eloquence, Erudition, and Elegance; and after a dialogue in verse, they requested Hamilton to travesty himself as a dwarf and present a paper (here follow more rhymes) to her Highness the Duchess of Maine, the great centre and supporter of this sort of literary fooling. At this point a burst of laughter broke down the comedy, and the actors were recognised for three gentlemen of the Court. Their attire was symbolic: Eloquence draped herself in "rich expressions," which took the form of a sheet of paper with certain verses of Boileau's written on it, and her veil had a fringe of Antithesis, materialised by the same method. Hamilton told them with some truth that, if they looked like anything, it was the personification of Pedantry; and so they parted, and the whole thing, described in sixteen pages duodecimo, went its way to Villeroy's camp. Mimure's answer is positively touching. Writing from the camp before Louvain on July 22nd, 1705, he explains how he had been racking his brains for two days after the letter reached him, and had

almost finished his "pitiable production," which he would certainly have sent but for the "occurrence of the 18th," when Marlborough attacked the French in their lines and drove Villeroy and the Elector of Bavaria back on Louvain. After this considerable disaster Mimure has the sense to perceive that badinage is not in season; happier times may come, he writes, but for the moment he assures Hamilton that his letter shall be known by heart. These are certainly strange preoccupations for a gentleman on active service even in those days of easy-going warfare.

These elaborate absurdities are spread through the whole correspondence. Hamilton's chief intimacy at Saint Germain's was with the Duke of Berwick and his family. Three Miss Bulkeley's lived with their sister the Duchess; many of Hamilton's letters are addressed to them, and to Henrietta Bulkeley he sent the pretty compliment that if he composes a portrait of her, as she has desired him to do, she will certainly be angry, for any portrait of her must look like flattery. But the best of the letters by far are those addressed to the Duke then campaigning in Spain. One, after picturing him in the land of Don Quixote, sketches the ladies at home in Saint Germain's. "They mend their lace, go and hang their nightcaps on strings in your garden, smarten up a few ribbons, or fall asleep gently over the canvas of their embroidery. They say that lively Nanette [the Duchess] keeps all her charms in retreat, and that Tallyho your dog sheds tears for your absence; but, between ourselves, there's not a word of truth in either."

All these letters have more verse than prose in them, but there is a larger allowance of gossip, and less mere compliment in the prose, and in the verse too, than elsewhere. There

Slaking your martial thirst at ease,  
Not from the streams that glaciers freeze,  
But at the trough of some sheep-fold,  
Or from a gutter's muddy lees:  
Who often, scorning luxuries,  
Have for a whole night long patrolled,  
And never dozed beneath the trees;  
Then in the morning's chilly breeze,  
If hope a flattering tale has told  
Of bloody wars and butcheries,  
Sans cruet, plate, or cloth unrolled,  
Consume with appetite black crusts a  
fortnight old.

is a deal of chaff about the Duke and his nickname Pike, apparently earned by his long figure. This is the sort of thing,—written, be it observed, when Berwick was driving the English and Austrians before him. The Pike has offended one of the ladies by a message in his last letter, so there are no two ways about it; he must commit suicide. But he should beware of hanging himself, for a butcher-boy, who had recently hung himself at Saint Germain, looked deplorably lanky in that posture. The best way would be for Berwick to sit down at table with things comfortable about him, and die genteelly of an apoplexy. In the meanwhile he must not think that all the fighting is being done in Spain. Several foraging parties have been conducted at Saint Germain, one notable one on the counterscarp of the terrace. The ladies returned with enough hay in their pockets, their bosoms, their shoes, and their stockings to victual the place for some time. A haycock, which they met in their expedition, was stormed and taken with much gallantry. In the meanwhile Hamilton, with his big wig and his bushy eyebrows (not unlike Swift's), walks about with his hands behind him, taking mental notes and criticising the ladies' ankles (after the frank fashion of the times) as they push each other down from the haycock. All this is duly set down, but there is not a word of compliment for the successful general. Nanette no doubt wrote him her solicitudes; but Hamilton drops the soldier altogether, and, if he mentions military terms, it is to upbraid the Duke jokingly for talking about such barbarous things instead of writing them pretty verses. Only here and there in each letter some little word peeps out, as if by chance, of indirect

commendation, more often than not ironically expressed: "Adieu, dear Duke. Have you eaten plenty of strawberries this season? [for some reason this was a standing joke]. But by the way, since Nimeguen, I suppose you are like honest Cavery, and live on nothing but counterscarps."

All this nonsense seems strange stuff to write to a Commander-in-Chief; but the extraordinary part of it is that Berwick answered in kind,—even with verses, which Hamilton, with the same ironical turn, blames for being spoiled by "certain conjugal tendernesses very much out of favour in these parts." Another letter describes the continual uneasiness of the ladies at every message from the army. Alarms affect even their toilettes, and one has only to look at their *coiffures* to know the latest news from the Rhine. But to remedy this, certain gentlemen of the Court organised picnics, and with the help of cheesecakes, syllabubs, tarts, and a judicious exhibition of sackposset successfully consoled the disconsolate. The last of the set is an epistle congratulatory on the victory of Almanza and the Spanish honours that were very naturally heaped on the victor. Hamilton rambles on for a couple of pages about Berwick's description of Spain and the probable whereabouts of Don Cupid, before he condescends to mention the victory. When he does, it is only to break into burlesque verse picturing the victor knocking at the gates of Lerida, mounted on an ugly jade, and bawling for his aide-de-camp at the top of his voice. Then, relapsing into prose: "Adieu, dear Pike. The fair Nanette was in a fume at the Marly ball and the Saint Germain masquerade, because you had not the courage to plead orders from His Majesty and push on to join us. If your absence lasts

a little longer I do not know what will become of the poor lady; she is getting so stout."

It was a curious state of society which reigned at this mimic English Court, and singularly unlike the good sense which characterised the surroundings of Queen Anne. Nothing also could have been less like the Court of Charles which Hamilton's pen busied itself with describing. James the Third, to give him the title by which Hamilton knew him, was exceedingly devout, either from conviction or in imitation of the French King, whose splendour was now eclipsing itself in a gloomy religiosity; at all events some of Hamilton's verses describe the tone of Saint Germain's as highly depressing. The correspondence in which they occur is characteristic of the time. It begins with a compliment to Madame d'Artagnan on the promotion of her husband who, as most people know, furnished not only a name but many traits to Dumas's famous Musketeer. This letter is written in verse and signed *De Plance*. Back comes a reply, also in verse but written for the lady by Malézieux, which ends with a compliment to Hamilton. It is in his reply that he protests that Saint Germain's is no place for poets: "Hymns are only in fashion here on high days and holy days with the other ecclesiastical music."

However, they do not seem to have amused themselves so badly at Saint Germain's, though it was not so gay as the English Court when Grammont gave water-parties on the Thames, and pretty Miss Jennings and her companion sallied out in disguise to sell oranges at the theatre. Hamilton relates, with his usual mixture of prose and rhyme, a stag-hunt which the whole Court attended. The stag broke away in front of the ladies, who expressed the utmost sympathy

for his fate, but were very impatient to see the dogs after him. After another half-hour he was again driven past, panting and lolling his tongue out pitifully, and the compassion of the ladies was redoubled. "Poor stag!" they all cried out; "I would give anything for him to get away. But," they added, "the rogue was going at a good pace still; it is to be feared they won't catch him." When the beast disappeared again into the wood there was much discussion: some thought he had escaped more of them were of opinion that he had met his fate in the wood, and were delighted to have been spared the spectacle; but none the less they thought the gentlemen might have remembered to send for them to see the finish. At that moment up came a messenger to say that the stag was at bay, and instantly the coachman got orders to drive his hardest. When the ground became impassable for the carriage, out they jumped without waiting for their grooms and hurried away with the most surprising strides, "though it was marshy ground where no divinities had ever set foot before, and these divinities were over the ankles in mud." "Flowers," says the poet, lapsing into verse, "sprang up as usual under their feet; but they were in too great a hurry to stop and acknowledge the compliment." When they got to the village they saw the stag at bay, with blood bubbling out of two great wounds in his sides and a crowd of dogs yelping about him. "Then turning his head nobly in every direction, without seeing a single friend in this crowd of spectators, he looked with a firm countenance on death, and also on a multitude of men, women, and children, whom he had never injured, yet who seemed as eager for his destruction as if he had been the



greatest ruffian in the universe." All the ladies burst into tears; but not one of them would deny herself the sight. And so they had their will, and the moralists rounds off the account with a page of frigid verses to show that the unhappy stag is less unhappy than a sighing lover.

Certainly Voltaire was right when he said that this foreigner was the first to discover the essential genius of the French language. This description of the hunt, with its mixture of real sentiment, keen irony, and rhetorical commonplaces, might stand for a type of the Frenchman's point of view. It suggests Rousseau almost as inevitably as Voltaire. It is a good example too of the manner in which Hamilton suppresses his comment. It seems pretty clear that he thought women very much out of place at such an entertainment; but you will not find him saying so. Just in the same way he relates how three gentlemen, to prevent the Duke of York from marrying Anne Hyde, stated expressly that they had received certain favours from her. The statements were entirely false. "All of them were men of honour," remarks Hamilton, "but they greatly preferred the Duke's honour to the honour of Miss Hyde." Is this ironical or simply callous? It would be hard to say. Probably, however, the ironical suggestion is there, and reflects Hamilton's own moral judgment; but when he is most completely out of sympathy with the code of his day he is most careful to suppress his disapproval; for he is studiously concerned not to be more rigid than the rest of the world, and even goes a step or two on the other side. It must be remembered that the Duke of York never showed any displeasure with the gentlemen who had been so zealous, and the Duchess even went out of her way to be civil to them,—an example of

self-command which Hamilton praises with unfeigned admiration.

In 1704 appeared a book which captivated everybody in France, Galand's translation of *THE ARABIAN NIGHTS*. Genii, and scimitars, and tales without beginning or end came most tyrannically into fashion. Hamilton's friend, Henrietta Bulkeley, thought the craze a little ridiculous, and Hamilton set himself to ridicule it. So came into being his prose tales, *THE FOUR FACARDINS*, *MAYBLOSSOM*, *ZENEYDA*, and *THE RAM*, which had a prodigious success at the time. They are rambling stories of giants and enchantment, and Hamilton sometimes contents himself with the mere amusement of invention. But to diversify his story and to point the satire he occasionally goes off into some interminable and involved explanation ten thousand times more confusing than the confusions of his model; or after a long passage of serious narration, in which the miraculous effects of a comb or a ball are related with great good faith, he relapses brusquely into a very colloquial tone.

While all this was going on at the Court, let us see what had happened to the Prince and Princess. "A good job too," said the Giant, "for my head was getting fairly bewildered with all this to do and this changing of minds. Besides, why make such a fuss over the loss of these two brats? For I take it, the Prince was only an impudent little fellow like that fop Noisy."

The stories make amusing reading enough still, and it is only justice to Hamilton to say, that except for a few pages in *THE FOUR FACARDINS*, they are perfectly decent. Indeed even the *Grammont Memoirs*, though certainly not a moral work, are surprisingly free from grossness of expression. As for that famous work, what is there to be said of it? Perhaps the most signifi-

cant thing is that it mentions neither the great plague nor the fire of London. It deals with the Olympians exclusively, and plague and fire knew better than to approach His Majesty; besides His Majesty took very good care that they should not. The popularity of the book can be only paralleled by Boswell's; but Hamilton draws the picture of a society rather than of an individual; the very best things in the book have nothing to say to Grammont. Take for instance this admirable sketch of one of the Cabal.

Lord Arlington took up the scheme which the Duke of Buckingham had abandoned, and proposed to rule the master by gaining an influence over the mistress. Yet a man of higher merit and higher birth might have been content with the fortune which Arlington had already acquired. The first negotiations which he had conducted had been at the Treaty of the Pyrenees; and though he had not advanced his master's interests, he had not wasted his own time; for he had caught to perfection the solemnity and gravity of a Spaniard, and in business he made a very good attempt to copy their delays. He had a scar across his nose covered by a long patch, or rather by a small lozenge-shaped plaster. Face-wounds generally give the expression a violent and warlike character, which is not unbecoming; it was the opposite with him, and this surprising plaster had so adapted itself to the mysterious air of his countenance that it seemed to add to it a certain appearance of weight and capacity. Masked by this manufactured physiognomy, in which greed was made to seem industry and impenetrable stupidity passed for discretion, Arlington had set up for a great politician, and people, having no time to enquire into the matter, had taken him at his word, and he had been made Secretary and Minister of State on the strength of his appearance.

It was in 1704 that Hamilton formed the project of writing a life of his brother-in-law, then well over seventy but still an excessively popular figure at the Court. Ninon de L'Enclos said of Grammont that he was the only old man who could remain

at Court without becoming ridiculous, and his vivacity in all senses of the word was indomitable. At seventy-five he recovered once more when at the very point of death, though matters had been so serious that Louis sent him his own confessor. Grammont only laughed, and told his Countess that Dangeau would certainly cheat her out of his conversion. Saint Evremont, his special philosopher, declared that he must certainly have found a ford across the Styx; and Grammont expressed his intention of never dying. He did, however, make an edifying end at the age of eighty-six in January, 1707. The Memoirs were not published till 1713. It would appear from a passage in Saint-Simon's Memoirs (quoted in M. Gustave Brunet's excellent edition of 1859) that the mourning for Grammont was not so universal as Hamilton would have us suppose. On the news of the Count's death Saint-Simon wrote.

He was a great wit, but one of those wits whose genius is all for mockery and repartee; whose energy and penetration direct themselves to finding the bad spot, the ridiculous side, or the weakness of each person, and then to painting it in a couple of irreparable and ineffaceable strokes of the tongue; and who have the hardihood to do this in public, in the royal presence and indeed rather before the King than elsewhere, without allowing merit, grandeur, favour, or rank to protect man or woman against it. By this performance he kept the King amused and instructed him in a thousand cruel facts, having acquired the liberty to say anything to him, even of his ministers. He was a mad dog whom nothing escaped. His known poltroonery set him below the reach of any consequences of his bites; he was into the bargain an impudent swindler, and cheated barefacedly at cards. With all these vices, and no sort of admixture of virtue, he had terrorised the Court and kept it in respect and dread. Accordingly at his death it felt itself delivered from a scourge whom the King favoured and distinguished during his whole lifetime.

That portrait has malice written over every line of it and is certainly no nearer the truth than Hamilton's; but it is another side of the truth.

Hamilton himself died in 1720 at Saint Germain after an existence of poverty and disappointment. It is thought that he wished to marry Henrietta Bulkeley, but both were portionless exiles. His religion prevented him from becoming really settled in England when he lived there. There is no doubt that he would gladly have found employment in the army; but when at last he found that employment, it was only to take a leading part in the losing

struggle, and expatriation followed naturally. The world is the richer by his exile. The *MEMOIRES DE GRAMMONT*, though perhaps Chamfort hardly characterised them correctly when he called them the breviary of youth, are certainly a masterpiece; and whatever one may think of Grammont, Hamilton was a brave and courteous gentleman. In spite of all his frivolities and his too tolerant morality, it is pleasant to think of this fine courtier turning to work with his cousin and carrying powder-barrels out of a burning house.

STEPHEN GWYNN.

TWO RADICALS OF THE OLD SCHOOL.<sup>1</sup>

BENTHAM was described by John Stuart Mill as one of the most seminal minds of his generation, and the truth of the remark has been exemplified by the recent publication of the biographies of two of his disciples, Francis Place and John Arthur Roebuck. Bentham died in the year of the first Reform Act, and of those who moved within his circle there can be no one living now; yet the echoes of his voice have not completely died away. He has been compared, indeed, to Sampson, who perished in the wreck of the building he destroyed, but the influence that he once wielded is not even now entirely spent. It may, therefore, be found interesting to observe the operation of his influence over the lives of two men who were among his most notable disciples, to see his abstract principles thus embodied in the concrete, and to consider how far and why those principles have been rejected or approved by later generations.

Francis Place, the elder of the two disciples, died in 1854. More than forty years have therefore passed before any adequate account of this remarkable man has been given to the world. To many, to most perhaps, even his very name will be unknown; yet the story of his life is worth recording. His great collection of manuscripts, a veritable treasure-house of history, now in

the British Museum, would alone have entitled him to be remembered by posterity. He was, to use an expression which Mr. Gladstone applied to the Earl of Aberdeen, one of the most suppressed characters in history; he kept himself as much as possible in the background, yet in all the political and social movements of his time he played a very influential part. He loved quiet power, which, it must be freely admitted, he used often for beneficial ends, and always with excellent intentions.

The story of his life may be very briefly told. Born in 1771, in the course of a long career he witnessed many changes. As a young man he felt the influence of the French Revolution, and of such books as Paine's *RIGHTS OF MAN* and Godwin's *POLITICAL JUSTICE*; in middle life he became a devoted admirer and disciple of Bentham and James Mill; he played an active part in the events which secured the passing of the Reform Act; he helped to start the Chartist movement, and saw its perversion and collapse; he witnessed the abolition of the Corn Laws. No one could have begun life under less auspicious circumstances than this unprepossessing-looking person, with his short, thick-set figure, his fallow skin, his black hair and bushy beard and whiskers, who lived to associate with some of the most powerful thinkers of his day, and whom Members of Parliament and Cabinet Ministers were not above consulting. The son of a brutal father, who was turnkey of a debtors' prison in the vicinity of Drury Lane, he received a

<sup>1</sup> 1. *AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND LETTERS OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE J. A. ROEBUCK*; by R. E. Leader. London, 1897.

2. *THE LIFE OF FRANCIS PLACE*; by Graham Wallas. London, 1898.

wretched education, and when quite a youth was apprenticed to a leather-breeches maker. In this trade, from strikes and other causes, he suffered great privations, and though a strong constitution enabled him to survive them, the iron entered into his soul in a way that he was never able to forget. But from the first he had an ardent love of learning, and by dint of great industry and a naturally vigorous understanding he contrived to teach himself an amount of knowledge which, all things considered, was amazing. It was during this early period of his life that he began to show his natural bent to political organisation, by actively engaging in the meetings and discussions of one of the first of working men's political associations, the London Corresponding Society; an association which was suspected of treasonable practices, and gave rise to some famous State-trials. But Place did not neglect his trade: he made leather-breeches well, as he did everything else to which he turned his hand; and in 1799 he had enterprise enough to open a shop for himself at Charing Cross. So well did it succeed that in twenty years he was able to leave it with a fortune. Rarely has a man so completely surmounted the bar of circumstance.

In 1807 he made his first appearance as an active electioneering politician. The constituency of Westminster, within which Place resided, had, for those days, an unusually democratic basis; it was a "scot and lot" borough, where every rate-payer had a vote. Then it was that Place taught the voters to form committees and to organise; and he succeeded in securing the return of Sir Francis Burdett, "*Westminster's Pride*," as he afterwards was called, one of the first thorough-going Radicals who entered the House of Commons. This

was by no means the least of Place's achievements, for he set the fashion of that systematic organisation of the voters which both parties now consider indispensable. He is in the main responsible for what may be called, in general terms, the introduction of the Caucus-methods into English politics, and he might not unfairly be described as the lineal ancestor of the National Liberal Federation. At any rate for many a year in Westminster politics the influence of Place was very great; "such influence," to use Sir Samuel Romilly's words, "as almost to determine the elections for Members of Parliament." That was certainly an extraordinary feat for a leather-breeches maker, who had become a master-tailor.

Soon afterwards there occurred what may be called the intellectual crisis of his life. In 1808 he was introduced to James Mill, and through him, in 1812, to Bentham. With both writers his friendship became intimate and lasting; they taught him their philosophy, and he, an excellent man of business, in return performed for them many a useful service, and brought them into closer contact with the world, with which, living, as they did, the contemplative life, they might have failed to keep in touch. The picture is a curious one: the Tailor, on his way to leave a parcel at a customer's, calling at Queen's Square Place where the Philosopher resided; or again, at Ford Abbey, the splendid mansion which Bentham rented for a time, the Philosopher, with his long white hair hanging down his shoulders, either writing in his library or "circumgyrating" round the garden; while James Mill was putting his children through a course of rigorous instruction, and Place was walking round the park with a Latin Grammar, or some work on Economics, in his

hand. Never surely did any country-house shelter such a devoted band of students. The affectionate terms in which Place and Bentham lived together may be gathered from their letters; "My dear old father," and "Dear good boy," were the terms in which they addressed one another.

It was rather later, in 1824, that Roebuck, then a young man fresh from Canada, became acquainted with the Mills and so through them with Place and Bentham, both of whom admired his youthful ardour and saw in him the making of a valuable recruit. By this time Place's position in the world was fairly well established, and he was enabled to carry out the main objects of his life. What then were his principles of action, and what did he accomplish? His activities found a vent in many different channels. As a practical politician, as a propagandist of the Benthamite principles of government, as a political economist, as an active participator in almost all educational and other social movements,—in all these ways he made his influence strongly felt. He refused to enter Parliament, but he had much to do with getting other persons there, and still more with their conduct when they got there. In his house at Charing Cross he formed a very useful and interesting library of books and pamphlets on political and economic subjects; and the Civic Palace, as it was called, became a kind of rendezvous for Members of Parliament and others who wished to prosecute inquiries, or to consult the owner, whose practical acquaintance with the facts of life among the working-classes was certainly unrivalled. No one knew better the current of events, or how to turn that current in the direction he desired. The way, for instance, in which at the time of the Reform

agitation he managed to control the more violent section of the demagogues, and to prevent the Duke of Wellington from forming a government, by causing a dread of a run for gold upon the Bank of England, was masterly in the extreme. Though he had a contempt for Parliament, which he spoke of as "rascally" and as an "atrocious Assembly," he wielded, by his influence over individual Members, an authority there almost as great as if he had been actually present in his own person. The case of Joseph Hume, that indefatigable denouncer of extravagance, who made himself a kind of self-appointed auditor of the national accounts, is typical. He owed everything to the political tutelage of Place, to whom, in 1812, he was introduced by James Mill. This is what some years afterwards the tutor said about his pupil: "Mill fixed him upon me some twenty-five years since. I found him devoid of information, dull and selfish. Our intimacy brought obloquy upon us both, to which he was nearly as callous as I was. He was taunted with the 'tailor, his master,' without whom he could do nothing. I was scoffed at as a fool for spending time uselessly upon 'Old Joe,' upon the 'apothecary.' Hume showed his capabilities and his imperturbable perseverance which have beaten down all opposition." But this parliamentary tuition was not the limit of Place's practical activities; in the repeal of the Combination of Laws, in the Reform agitation, in the drafting of the People's Charter, in the establishment of popular schools, in the abolition of the newspaper stamp, he played a leading part. As a thinker he was not so much original as a disseminator of other men's ideas. He was, however, a great collector of statistics, which served him well in his study of political economy,



though even here he was little more than an ardent follower of Malthus. He had no natural literary gift, though his pamphlets and journalistic articles were written in a terse and vigorous style. Again, no one did so much to introduce the thoughts of the Benthamite philosophers to the masses of the English reading public; he reprinted cheap editions of some of James Mill's most striking articles, and, in particular, the famous article on Government, which originally appeared in the Supplement to *THE ENCYCLOPÆDIA BRITANNICA*. He also brought out, with the assistance of Wooler, (a now forgotten personage, but once notorious as the editor of *THE BLACK DWARF*,) Bentham's plan of Parliamentary Reform in the shape of a catechism. It is, indeed, not too much to say that if it had not been for Place, the enunciation of the Benthamite principles of government would have failed to some extent for want of a proper publication. *THE WESTMINSTER REVIEW*, which was established in 1824, was an admirable organ of philosophic Radicalism, but it appealed only to a very limited class of educated persons.

The Right Honourable John Arthur Roebuck was thirty years younger than Place, and living until 1879, he may be said to have almost linked together the beginning of the century and the end. He stood, at any rate, between a former and a later age, "giving a hand to each." To have talked with Roebuck was to have talked with one who was intimate with Bentham who had been an Oxford undergraduate when George the Third ascended the throne. The chief incidents in his life may be very briefly told; for though he made a larger figure in public than Place, his actual accomplishments were not so great, nor his influence so deep and

wide. He was taken to Canada when a child, but returned to England in 1824, with nothing in his pocket, but with a high-hearted resolve to make his own way in the world. Coming to London, he was introduced by Peacock to John Stuart Mill, who, as Peacock said, belonged "to a disquisition set of young men." Very naturally he attended the debates of the Utilitarian Society which John Stuart Mill had founded, and which met at Bentham's house. In this way he became acquainted with Bentham himself, and the other members of his circle, among them Francis Place. It is no wonder that the impressionable young man, thrown among surroundings such as these, became an extreme Radical. In 1832 he entered Parliament, where he soon made himself notorious by his assaults upon the Whig Government, for which he expressed supreme contempt. Though insignificant in stature, and though his voice was harsh and shrill, he won the attention of the House by the violence of his language. Even Disraeli, who did not care to waste his epigrams, taunted him with his "Sadlers Wells sarcasms" and his "melodramatic malignity." Outside the House his energy was not in the least abated, and in 1835, with a view to a contest over the question of the newspaper-stamp, he established his *PAMPHLETS FOR THE PEOPLE*, which were so extreme that even Grote, sound Radical though he was, refused to identify himself with such "ultra and shocking reforms," or to give the project his support. These tracts, in which appeared some of Place's most characteristic work, and republications of some of James Mill's articles in *THE WESTMINSTER REVIEW*, had a wide circulation and produced a great effect. Of the Chartist movement, in its inception, Roebuck was the most earnest parliamentary advocate;

and he also pleaded the cause of popular education, and of self-government for the Colonies. But his mental infirmities and caprices went far to ruin his career; and Bentham prophesied truly, when he said that his temper would do him more harm than his intellect would do him good. With his fellow Radicals, both in and out of Parliament, he was frequently at issue. With Grote he quarrelled; from John Stuart Mill he was estranged for nearly a life-time; Joseph Hume he stigmatised as obstinate or silly; and Cobden he called "a poor creature," overborne by Bright, "the pugnacious peace-talking friend;" a remark which recalls to mind the saying that Bright must have been a prize-fighter, if he had not been a Quaker. But this constant recrimination was more than even Roebuck, who gave as much as, and sometimes more than, he got, was able to endure. "I am," he said, "heartily sick of my friends. My opponents I expected would abuse me, but I have ever found that the most bitter of all my violent abusers were my intimate friends." As time went on, he, like so many other men of his stamp, recanted many of his earlier opinions. Speaking in 1869 of the Radicals he said, "Of these I was one, but I have seen the error of my ways." Again, with reference to the extension of the suffrage he remarked: "The hopes of my youth and manhood are destroyed, and I am left to reconstruct my political philosophy." So too of the House of Lords, which he had formerly described as consisting of "a few ignorant, irresponsible, interested peers," he admitted that when a youth he could not see "the great advantage which now, I think, arises from the existence of that Assembly." But though change of circumstances might, to some extent, account for Roebuck's changes

of opinion, he never attained to the *mitis sapientia* of age; he retained to the last much of that cynical asperity and habit of ill-considered censure, which was so strongly characteristic of the Philosophic Radicals among whom his early life was cast. As Kinglake said, "he appointed himself to the office of public accuser."

Place, the self-made working-man, the sturdy and consistent Radical, and Roebuck, the brilliant but wayward parliamentary orator, though very different men, were both Radicals of a class that has long since passed away. They had a common tie that brought them closely into contact: they both drank from the same source of inspiration, the Benthamite philosophy; and it is in their relation to the remarkable group of men who taught that philosophy, and did so much to mould contemporary thought, that they will most interest succeeding generations. Who then were the Benthamites, the Philosophic Radicals, or Utilitarians, of whose principles Place and Roebuck were the living and active incarnation and embodiment?

In a letter written in 1802 to his friend Dumont, we find Bentham naively asking, "Benthamite! what sort of animal is that? I can't find any such word in the dictionary." That Bentham should have felt surprise at the existence of the word was natural enough; for, so far as he was concerned, there was never any oral teaching, nor any esoteric school that hung upon his lips. His influence was entirely derived from the publication of his writings, and he thus obtained an audience fit though few. He rarely invited more than a single guest at a time to dine with him, and he conversed for relaxation merely. Sometimes, indeed, a person who wanted to consult him, would not await an invitation; as was once the

case with Brougham who wrote him the following extraordinary note: "Grand-papa, I want some pap; I will come for it at your dinner-hour." That Bentham never formed a school, in the proper sense of the term, is expressly stated by James Mill. "It is also," he said, "a matter of fact that until within a very few years of the death of Mr. Bentham, the men of any pretension to letters who shared his intimacy, and saw enough of him to have the opportunity of learning much from his lips, were, in number, two." These two were Mill himself, whom Bentham called his spiritual son, and Dumont, who deemed Bentham's work of such immense importance to the world, that he devoted a life-time to making it known to the French-speaking world.

It was in 1808 that James Mill was introduced to Bentham, who then was sixty years of age and only in the beginning of his fame, so far as England was concerned. The friendship of the two men was very close, and Mill and his family were sometimes the guests of Bentham at his country residences, Barrow Green House or Ford Abbey, for many months together. Though Mill was a vigorous and independent thinker, he accepted Bentham's doctrines in the main, and made them known among his own admirers, such as Ricardo, Grote, and Place. Thus Mill became a kind of living bridge between the recluse philosopher and the world, and in no other sense than that of accepting the philosophy of Bentham was there any such thing as a school of Benthamites at all. It would, indeed, be much more true to say that a school was formed by Mill, who, by his earnestness and dialectical skill, obtained an extraordinary ascendancy over the minds of the young men who came to hear him. Of Mill in this capacity

Grote has drawn for us an admirable picture: "His unpremeditated oral exposition was hardly less effective than his prepared work with his pen. . . . Conversation with him was not merely instructive, but provocative to the dormant intelligence. Of all persons whom we have known, Mr. James Mill was the one who stood least remote from the lofty Platonic ideal of Dialectic,—*τοῦ διδόναι καὶ δέχεται λόγον* (the giving and receiving of reasons),—competent alike to examine others, or to be examined by them on philosophy." It is therefore to James Mill that the gradual formation of the group of thinkers known as Benthamites must be ascribed. After the year 1824 when John Stuart Mill began to introduce his own friends into the circle, it underwent a change; for the younger men, especially John Stuart Mill himself, whom Mrs. Grote spoke of as "that wayward intellectual deity," upon some questions did not hesitate to take up an independent standpoint. The very word Utilitarian, which gradually came into use to designate the Philosophic Radicals, was applied by John Stuart Mill himself. Nevertheless, Bentham was the sun around which the other constellations clustered.

Such then were the Benthamites. But what were the essential characteristics of that philosophy which so deeply tinged contemporary thought, so captivated men like Place and Roebuck, and was the strongest influence, of a purely speculative kind, which has ever been brought to bear on English politics? The range of that philosophy, including, as it did, politics and morals, political economy, metaphysics, and analytic psychology, was very wide; but there is only one branch of it, that dealing with the principles of government, that is relevant to the subject of this essay.

This is not the place to enter into a discussion of Benthamism generally; its ethical basis of self-interest; its dry and dusty method of rigorous analysis; its pitiless exposure of many fondly cherished fallacies; its war upon the feelings and emotions; its purging language, as it was said, of the affections of the soul; its stoical indifference to all pleasures but that derived from the approbation of the conscience; and the curious mixture in its professors of narrow class-prejudice with limitless philanthropy. But upon the Benthamite principles of government a few words may be said, because it was upon those principles that Place and Roebuck, and all the thinking Radicals of the earlier portion of the century, were nourished. To understand those principles, in their essential elements, and to apprehend the manner in which they were disseminated, is to see how widely the Radicalism of that time differs from the Radicalism of our own.

The growth of Radicalism in Bentham's mind has a very curious history. Beginning life as a Tory, and an admirer of the English Constitution as the perfection of human wisdom, he gradually worked his way to the principle of Utility, or that of the greatest happiness of the greatest number. In 1776 he published his *FRAGMENT ON GOVERNMENT*, in which he showed that the Constitution was not so perfect as was commonly supposed. The work was admired by those few who had the intelligence to appreciate its merits, and he owed to it his friendship with Lord Shelburne. But to Bentham's great astonishment and chagrin, it was utterly neglected by those who were in power. In 1828 he published a second edition with a lengthy introduction, which is one of the most curious and interesting bits of autobiography in literature. It would appear that Bentham's Radi-

calism was in no small degree due to personal causes, to slights, either real or imaginary, which he received from eminent lawyers whom he met when Shelburne's guest at Bowood; and he tells us that by 1822 he had arrived at the conclusion that the English governing class deliberately maintained abuses out of purely selfish interests; that, in a word, he had discovered the principle of self-preference in government. In brief that principle may be described as follows, that the only security for good government lies in an identity of interest in the governors and the governed. It was this principle that James Mill took and worked out in detail with extraordinary skill. As a reasoner upon the ultimate principles of government, indeed, Mill was much superior to Bentham, who excelled in quite another field; and it is to Mill that the first definite exposition of philosophic Radicalism must be ascribed. His famous article on Government, written in 1820 for the Supplement of *THE ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA*, and afterwards reprinted by his friends, and his still more famous article which appeared in the first number of the *WESTMINSTER REVIEW* in 1824,—an article which he considered to be the greatest blow ever struck for Radicalism—contained the kernel of his teaching. Starting from the premise that self-love is paramount in politics, he argued that there could be no security for good government without an identity of interest in the governors and the governed; that there could be no such identity except in a democracy; and that the English Government, in particular, was nothing but an oligarchy whose interest it was to oppress the lower classes. Upon the aristocracy, who filled the House of Lords and who, at that time, were the patrons of two-thirds of the seats in the House of Commons, with its two props, as

he called them, of the Church of England and the lawyers, he waged unrelenting war. Such were the principles which Place and Roebuck adopted and believed in with all their heart and soul; and it is only by bearing this in mind that the asperity, not to say ferocity, of their attacks upon the aristocracy and the landlords, and all that tended to support them, can be faintly understood. That aristocracy was to the Philosophic Radicals, who stepped forward as apostles or crusaders, what Carthage was to Rome.

A moment's reflection will discover a wide difference between the Radicalism of Place and Roebuck, and that which is in vogue to-day. In the first place, any discussion upon the ultimate principles of government would excite but very little interest in these days, and it is difficult to realise the excitement which was formerly aroused by the brilliant sparring between James Mill on the one side and Macaulay and Mackintosh on the other. It was well remarked by Burke that a propensity to resort to theories of government was a sure sign of an ill-conducted State; and it is a certain proof of the progress of the people that any such discussion as that on the identity of interest in the governors and the governed would be thought now entirely futile. In these days men prefer to discuss individual measures on the more limited, and perhaps more useful, ground of practical expediency. Secondly, since Mill wrote, the world has enlarged its experience. It has, in fact, discovered that monarchs and aristocracies have often acted, and do constantly act, in the interests of the governed; that identity of interest in the governors and the governed is not necessarily a security for good government at all; that the governed do not always know their true interest, nor pursue it

when they know it. James Mill's reasoning was, as has been shown by later thinkers, onesided and misleading, and both his premises and deductions were far too absolute in character. It is true that in his days the state of the mass of the people was very bad: there was scarcity and poverty, ignorance and leaden-eyed despair; and the governing classes did not always consider the best interests of the people. But the world possesses now an experience of democracy and representative government which it was impossible for Mill to have; and it is no exaggeration to say that, out of England, the representative system has proved itself but very moderately successful. For extravagance and corruption some modern democracies have been as bad as any oligarchy ever was. A democratic form of government demands more courage, integrity, and intelligence than Place and Roebuck ever dreamed of. But if the matter of the doctrines of Radicalism has changed, much more so has the manner of their teaching. In this age of easy tolerance it is difficult to realise the violence of the language in which the Radicals indulged towards the Whigs and Tories, and even towards one another. Some excuse may, indeed, be found for men who were looked upon as Ishmaelites, and were disowned by their aristocratic friends; but it was a weakness from which the best were not exempt. James Mill's asperity and anger towards the governing classes was such as to astonish even the indulgence of his friends. Bentham described his Radicalism as arising rather from his hatred of the few than his love of the many; and Grote said that he had "a scorn and hatred of the ruling classes which amounted to positive fanaticism." Roebuck said even worse; that he was "a severe democrat in

words" who "bowed down to wealth and position." The Benthamites, in short, were still living in an age when a certain ferocity in politics had not entirely died away. In the time of the Tudors or the Stuarts, a man who took a strong line in politics ran some danger of a State-trial, the Tower, and the scaffold. Of a later age Macaulay said that it was as dangerous to be a Whig as to be a highwayman. By degrees the ferocity was mitigated, but it still lingered up to the time of the first Reform Bill.

In one very important way the old school of Radicals differed from the new; for, whereas they then strove to strike off the fetters, unnaturally imposed, which clogged the energies and industry of the individual person, they now tend more and more to invoke the interference of the State. Of this fact, whatever view may be taken of it, the lives of Place and Roebuck are a striking illustration. They were both of them sturdy individualists. From his own personal experience Place was perfectly acquainted with the conditions of the lives of the mass of the labouring population; yet he never falsely flattered them, nor weakly implored the protection of the State. "All legislative interference," he said, "must be pernicious. Men must be left to themselves to make their own bargains; the law must compel the observation of compacts, the fulfilment of contracts. There it should end. . . . No restrictive laws should exist. Every one should be at liberty to make his own bargain in the best

way he can." And a similar spirit animated Roebuck; "The plain fact is," he said, "we meddle too much with one another." Though, for instance, he believed that it was the duty of the State to educate the people, he thought that in the matter of religious instruction allowance should be made for differences of opinion; "So believing," he said, "I shall certainly support every plan for the education of the people by the State which does not interfere with the religious feelings and opinions of the parents and guardians of the children to be educated." In the same spirit he attacked the extreme temperance and Sabbatarian parties; he called them "canting hypocrites," and "two muddy streams" which, after running some distance side by side, "had at last united their waters, and now they formed one foaming muddy river, which it was difficult to stem, and very disagreeable to see and smell." That seems strong language to employ, but he believed that the temperance and Sabbatarian advocates would deprive the working classes of those enjoyments which the rich would be permitted to retain. His attitude on the question was, at any rate, characteristic of the man. No Radical now has the earnest faith with which Place and Roebuck were inspired, or if he has he does not show it. The old Radicalism was easy to define; it could almost be reduced to a syllogism; to say in a few words what modern Radicalism means would be a task beyond the wit of man.

C. B. ROYLANCE-KENT.



## THE GENTLE ART OF CYCLING.

BY AN AMBLER.

## II.

WE were sitting in a little room at the back of the village inn, the Schoolmaster and I. He did not tell me that he was a schoolmaster; but the expression of habitual worry on his face, the constant tend of the conversation towards the vagaries of the Education Department, grotesque examination-papers, the characteristics of the genus *boy*, and many other similar touches, convinced me that he was a pedagogue. Then, again, for four mortal weeks he had been sitting on the banks of the stream that flowed beneath the window, trying to hook innocent little fishes that had never done him any harm. This was just the sort of pastime that a man, whose soul had been embittered by the brutal stupidity and Satanic impishness of a hundred boys, would fly to. He was manufacturing a mysterious paste of a variety of messy farinaceous substances, in which he now and then dropped a few drops of gin, much to the disgust of the natives who peeped in at us through the bar-window. With this toothsome mixture he expected to commit much slaughter on the following morning.

It was most annoying; the rain was pouring down steadily, to the Schoolmaster's great satisfaction, and he would persist in talking fish. I knew that nothing but some educational subject would lead him away from his awful hobby, so, in sheer desperation, I tackled him on the teaching of foreign languages. He took the bait and we were soon at it, to use the words of Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim, "Ding-dong, horse

and foot, helter-skelter, right and left."

"Oh, yes," said he testily, "there's to be no application now; everything's to be made easy, and boys and girls are to be taught French without their knowing it. They're to pick it up, as children pick up their mother-tongue! Why, sir, they'd be seventy years of age before they could read half-a-dozen pages on such a system. When I was a boy I had to work hard to acquire knowledge. My first French book was William Cobbett's French Grammar—do you know it?"

"Know it! I should think I did," I replied. "Shall I ever forget the villain's instructions for learning the genders? You were to rule sheets of paper down the centre and then go through the dictionary, copying out the feminines on one side of your line and the masculines on the other, and committing them to memory a page at a time. Do you know anything more likely to prevent a boy learning French?"

The Schoolmaster's worn face relaxed in a smile, but we soon both agreed that Cobbett was a fine old fellow, and had done much to set people thinking.

It was this conversation that made me determine to ride over to Farnham the next day, if the weather would but change. What better excuse could one find for a ride along the Hog's Back than an interview with the ghost of old Cobbett? And beyond Farnham there was Moor Park, with recollections of Dean Swift and Stella. The Schoolmaster ap-

proved my plans, and, rather sheepishly, begged me to bring him a spray from Cobbett's grave. You see, in spite of years of suffering from the brutality of boys, the old fellow had still a soft place left in his heart.

The morning looked doubtful, to say the least of it; the London paper prophesied thunder-showers with bright intervals. I resolved to take my chance of having a fair share of the latter. When I once asked an old skipper how he liked sea-faring, he gave me this answer: "If ever you come across a man who has been on the seas for three years, and says he likes it, you may put him down as a liar." Just so, if ever you come across a cyclist who says that he rides in all weathers and enjoys it, don't you believe him. To enjoy cycling three things are necessary, a good machine, a good road, and fair weather. If you are on tour, a day spent in prowling about a country village or town is infinitely more enjoyable than driving on laboriously through pelting rain and slush; the rest does you a great deal of good and gives zest to the next day's ride. You are a poor specimen of humanity if you cannot discover some interesting characters in the place and pick up scraps of information from them. I rejoice to find in my wanderings so many village libraries, and the number appears to be increasing. Many of them consist of simply a room with a table and a few chairs in it, and a shelf or two round the walls; the daily and illustrated papers lie on the table, and the shelves contain a few books. The cost of keeping up such an institution must be very small, but it is a civilising and refining influence that should bear excellent fruit. I admire quiet, unostentatious work of this kind. Your great man gives a large sum of money to build a big

institution, which is opened with a loud flourish of trumpets, and immediate glory is showered upon the gracious founder, everyone taking it for granted that the institution is going to accomplish great things because it cost a pile of money. The founders of these simple libraries received no glory and expected none; they have been content to try what can be done to raise the tone of the village labourer and mechanic. Such places form a quiet haven for a man when he has half-an-hour to spare, and they often give shelter and amusement to the belated cyclist, who, if he be a true follower of the Gentle Art, slips a coin into the contribution-box, and perhaps, when he returns home, sends down a few books to add to the shelves.

My nearest way to Farnham would have been through the scattered hamlet of Send, on to the famous Ripley road, but as that would have meant about five miles of rather rough riding, I decided to tack in the direction of New Woking, and get on to a road leading through shady lanes and across commons into Guildford from the Stoke side. As I got into the saddle I caught sight of the Schoolmaster sitting in his melancholy punt, where he had been casting his line on the waters since six o'clock that morning. He waved his hat in farewell, a most unusual display of high spirits in so undemonstrative a character. I concluded that his three hours' exertions must have resulted in a bite.

The roads were none the worse for yesterday's rain, and there was the advantage of having no dust to contend with. Between Woking and Guildford there are no hills worthy the name, only a series of gentle inclines that even elderly ambler can get over with ease. There is one nice little slope, running down into the road that leads to Mayford, where the trees

meet overhead like the arched roof of a cathedral aisle. I should not like my enemy, the Scorchers, to know it, but I have been guilty of *coasting* down this incline. In justice to myself, however, I wish to state that I have never been guilty of such an act when any man, woman, or other animal has been in sight.

On the ethics of coasting disputations might be carried on for years by discourses, letters, and pamphlets, just as St. Augustin and the early Fathers discussed Pelagianism and Arianism. The sensation is delightful, and it is a tempting form of rest for weary legs; but it is decidedly dangerous both for the rider and the pedestrians who may happen to get in his way. The cockney Harrys and country yokels who go in for coasting without a break to their machines deserve all they get at the hands of the magistrates, and a great deal more. No one but a stupid brute would think that all the men, women, and children in a district ought to leave the road clear in order that he may indulge in a selfish form of amusement. The cyclist, who is also a gentleman, realises that the high road is for others as well as for himself.

On this particular ride, when I turned the corner of the road where the incline commences, I was suddenly confronted with a brewer's dray, a drove of bullocks, and a female cyclist, all going downwards. Mam'selle, evidently frightened half out of her life at the cattle, was tacking from one side of the road to the other in a dangerous fashion. She had evidently turned the corner at full speed, instead of slowing up, and had suddenly found herself on an incline within a few yards of the drove of bullocks and the dray, both of which were of course travelling at a slow pace. She was too nervous to dismount on the hill, and, like one half crazy, was steering

the machine from side to side of the road, to prevent herself being precipitated among the bullocks. The inevitable end came in less than two minutes; the front wheel went into the bank, and over went the young lady. She had escaped the dray and the drove, but she had smashed her pretty aluminium lamp, bent a crank, and given herself an unpleasant shaking. Bicycling too dangerous for ladies? Not a bit of it! He would be a bold man who should suggest that horse-riding is too dangerous for ladies, yet if a horse is not treated with discretion he brings the rider to grief. A bicycle is quieter than the quietest horse, and, if used with care, will harm no one who mounts its saddle. Unfortunately many ladies when they ride a bicycle (and, one may add, a horse too,) seem to lose all that part of valour which is called discretion. They do not seem to realise any possibility of danger, and they go gaily down hills where the strongest man would not be ashamed to dismount. We amblers see them and shudder. What wonder that the newspapers teem with accidents to our petticoated cyclists? The wonder is that they are not much more frequent.

Having assisted the young lady as much as was possible, I continued my way while she pushed her machine homewards, a sadder if not a wiser woman. I like this road to Guildford, because the lanes are so pretty, at times reminding one of Devonshire; there is none of the monotony of the high road,—not that I would imply that the high road to Guildford is monotonous, far from it—but I am thinking of main roads in general. From these particular lanes you get delightful peeps at fine old mansions of time-mellowed brick, half covered with ivy and nestling among huge trees. We Englishmen are so accustomed to the

sight of these sylvan giants that we scarcely appreciate their beauty, and seldom realise what the growth of a great tree really means. Did you ever, to amuse your children, plant an acorn in your garden and watch its yearly growth? How slowly, how painfully slowly, Nature seems to work. You cannot perceive that the tiny stem is any thicker or higher this year than it was last. Look upon these old giants, and try to realise what the growth of their scaly trunks really means, how many generations of men have their green boughs waved over. To me, there is a solemnity, as well as beauty, about a great tree. It makes me feel how frail a thing is man, what a small item he is in the economy of Nature. Greater minds require an Alpine range to bring this home to them; an old oak-tree in a Surrey lane is enough for me.

What was once the village of Stoke is now a suburb of the town of Guildford, and an ugly one, of course, as most suburbs are. You ride up a gentle macadamised ascent until you reach what is called Chertsey Street, where the gradient is much steeper and you are in a region of rough granite setts leading into the High Street. Some people ride up Chertsey Street and down the High Street. Why, it is difficult to tell, for it is an uncomfortable jolt at the best, and the traffic is often thick and always erratic. I invariably walk down the High Street, because I cannot pass the second-hand book shop without overhauling the stock. Have you ever experienced that indescribable thrill of delight at finding a second-hand bookseller in some remote country town, in which you had not dreamed of being confronted with such a joy? If not, then you have lost at least one of the pleasures of life. The worst of buying books is, that some

day you may come across a copy at a lower price than you have given for yours. This was my unfortunate experience on this particular day. There stood I, face to face with two real bargains, which I could not take advantage of because they were already on my shelves, having been purchased at a much higher price. Unable to bear the sight, I savagely pushed the machine down the hill and over the canal bridge; and then mounting once more, turned up the narrow road on the right, called the Farnham Road.

But it is impossible for any middle-aged ambler to go very far along this road without dismounting, for it ascends at a rather acute angle to the level of the famous Hog's Back. After many miles of narrow winding lanes, the billowy hills, that are somewhat suddenly revealed as one climbs out of Guildford, appear like mountain ranges; Nature seems at a bound to have changed her mood and taken up her work on a grand scale. My travelled friends, I pray you not to smile at a simple-minded Englishman speaking of grandeur in connection with a Surrey landscape. Before you have finished the first mile you are ready to admit the legitimacy of the title Hog's Back, for *hoga*, a hill, it certainly is. When the summit is reached, however, you are fully rewarded for your exertions. You are on an excellent riding-road, which runs for about six miles along the narrow hill-top on either side of which are superb views of typical South of England scenery. Surely there is no cycle ride to surpass this!

Directly I began to face the exhilarating hill-top breeze, I congratulated myself on my good fortune. "Bright intervals," the meteorological officials had announced; I had captured one of them, at all events. The black clouds, that had followed threat-

eningly in my wake all the morning, had now passed away, and, riding along in a perfect blaze of August sunshine, I had the privilege of seeing the rain, on the other side of the valley, pouring out of ragged-edged clouds upon Hind-head. Never have I had so glorious a run. Down in the plain on the north side, as far as eye could see, was a beautiful land of green fields and yellow corn, interspersed with patches of woodland in their richest summer garb; on the south was a lovely valley, thickly clothed with foliage of every possible tint of green. I must needs dismount and rest me on a gate to enjoy this superb scene. Such, I thought, must have appeared the promised land to Moses, when he stood on Pisgah. And then my fancy turned to young Fitz-Eustace and his gallant cry,—

Where's the coward that would not dare  
To fight for such a land!—

when, with a rush and a whirl like a steam-engine, there shot by me a youth on a bicycle. His back described the once familiar Scorchers' curve: his nose almost touched the handle-bar of his machine; and he seemed to be taking all available means of shutting out the lovely landscape through which he was passing. Had an avenging angel, or devil, been pursuing him he could not have pedalled with more pathetic fierceness. It was a sorry sight indeed for a gentle ambler, and it would have made me unhappy for some time, but, as I got into the saddle again, the breeze increased to something like a gale, and my attention was turned to the task of keeping the machine upright. The wind sang wild songs in the spokes of my wheels as I came in sight of Farnham and its hop-gardens, and it was a relief to amble along in the sheltered roads on the lower ground.

Once in the lower road it was

easy to see that one was in a land of hops, and that picking-time was near. Shabby individuals, chins unshaven and hair unkempt, trudged along, each with a mysterious nobbly-looking sack slung over his shoulder. Whatever else the sack contains, you may rest assured that it holds a kettle or a saucepan, or a publican's tin can, for boiling water at the roadside. These tramps, however fond they may be of beer, dearly love a cup of tea, or they would not carry the means of making it for the number of miles that they do. I have often been astonished at their deftness in preparing afternoon tea, which they seem to take at all hours of the day. Any one of them, duly washed and combed, would be a great acquisition at a picnic. If you have ever tried to prepare and light a fire on such an occasion you will readily appreciate the skill of these gentlemen of the road, who get a bundle of twigs blazing in the proverbial no time. The tea and the sugar are kept, each in its separate screw of paper, in the trousers' pocket. Milk is dispensed with as a rule, but I have occasionally seen them scraping out a tin of condensed milk. These men always seem to be in a state of anxiety about the time of day; if they condescend to speak to the traveller, they always want to know the time,—they also want another penny to add to the threepence they have in order to obtain a night's lodging. You may, however, relieve yourself from any anxiety on this point, their knowledge of dry barns, out-houses, and casual wards being of a most extensive and peculiar character. We should probably be greatly astonished if we knew the number of people who live on the road during the summer months. On a certain little peninsula formed by the winding of the river Wey, three of these gentlemen met

every evening at about six o'clock during last summer, two middle-aged men and one old man with white hair. I had frequent opportunities for watching the spot, and regularly, within five minutes of each other, they would make their appearance shortly after the church clock in the distant village struck six. Sturdy and strong they looked, and the old man was decidedly fat; they were always in excellent spirits, and cracked jokes together while the saucepan was boiling for their tea. One of them always sang the same song, while he examined the contents of his bag:—

Dearest Mabel, now I'm able  
To buy you a happy home,  
Since they've raised my screw, love,  
I've enough for two, love.  
Will you marry?  
Do not tarry—

He never went beyond this point in the song; but whether it was because he remembered no more, or because the arrangements for the meal distracted his attention, I could not succeed in finding out. A notable thing about the party was that they always had a newspaper, which one of them, seated comfortably among the ferns, his back supported against the trunk of a fir tree, read aloud to the others as they sipped their tea from tin cans. And what do you think was the first item of news the reader always started with? It was invariably the cricket intelligence. To witness their excitement over the latest scores from Lord's or the Oval was an experience not easily forgotten. How these men picked up a living I could never discover; but they were obviously quite happy and well fed, notwithstanding their rags, and they never seemed to be short of tobacco.

Past the famous hop-gardens into the village of Farnham I trundled,

and turning up a side road to the left, paid my respects to the inn where William Cobbett was born,—the Jolly Farmer. It is a commonplace public-house, and nothing more. What a pity it is that babies who are to become famous should not always be born in picturesque surroundings! No one could wax enthusiastic over the Jolly Farmer. By the by, how few famous men has the licensed victualling interest produced; or is it that the sons of publicans, when they achieve greatness, take pains to conceal the occupation of their sires? But the publicans can really only claim half of Cobbett, for his father was a farmer as well as an inn-keeper.

While I was riding along the rough central street of Farnham, my mind filled with thoughts of pugnacious Cobbett, a strange thing happened, as the novelist would say. A very unclean Italian, once an innocent peasant, now one of the horrors of civilisation, was ferociously grinding out one of Moody and Sankey's hymns. I had never, until that moment, heard any sacred song played on a street-organ. The strange thing that happened was this,—the hymn-tune set up a train of thought which eventually led to a name that I had not read of, nor heard spoken, for more years than I care to reckon. It was as if an impression had long ago been made upon some of that mysterious tissue which forms fold upon fold in the brain, an impression made and sealed up, only to be unsealed at some future time by some other impression. The organ did it. In every land where the English language is spoken, there are few places where men meet for public worship, few homes the walls of which have not echoed to the words,

Rock of Ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.



I wonder how many of the singers know that the writer of that hymn, Augustus Toplady, was running about Farnham village, a little boy of twelve years, when William Cobbett first saw light through one of the windows of the Jolly Farmer. Of all the babies that have ever been born in Farnham, baby Cobbett and baby Toplady are the only two who lived to make any stir in the world. Yes, Toplady not only wrote sweet and gentle hymns, but he wielded a doughty metaphysical sword against no less a giant than John Wesley; and when theologians disagree, it is a decided stir that they make. As to Cobbett, his life was a continual stirring up of things in general. Did he not write under the name of Peter Porcupine? Was he not accused of raising discontent in the mind of the agricultural labourer, and inciting him to acts of violence, and to the destruction of corn, stacks, machinery and other property? Cobbett had his faults, and serious faults they were; but, as the high-priest of industry and dogged perseverance, he did much to give backbone to the young men of his day. He was the great advocate of the gospel of self-help, the great physician who recommended hard work for every physical, mental, and social disease. His *ADVICE TO YOUNG MEN* was at one time in the pocket of every thoughtful young workman; and the workmen of to-day have lost much by turning their backs upon such an excellent character-forming book.

Cobbett would certainly have been an enthusiastic cyclist had he lived in our day. As it was, he had to do his tours on horse-back. He was perhaps the only man of his age, with the exception of Arthur Young and Thomas Day, who did what cyclists do now every summer,—travel the roads, from village to village and town

to town, getting into close touch with nature and man. Cobbett's *RURAL RIDES* should be in every cyclist's library. The book will suggest many excursions, and it gives a remarkable insight into the conditions of rural life at the beginning of the century. In it are described, with an always vigorous and sometimes picturesque pen, many places that are familiar to the wheelman who has travelled the Sussex and Hampshire roads. Cobbett's extraordinary knack of letting off his political steam at all sorts of odd times and places, is shown at its best in some of his descriptions of scenery, as in the following characteristic example :

This pretty valley of Chilworth has a run of water, which comes out of the high hills, and which occasionally spreads into a pond; so that there is in fact a series of ponds connected by this run of water. This valley which seems to have been created by a bountiful Providence as one of the choicest retreats of man, which seems formed for a scene of innocence and happiness, has been by ungrateful man so perverted as to make it instrumental in effecting two of the most damnable of purposes; in carrying into execution two of the most damnable inventions that ever sprang from the mind of man, under the influence of the devil! namely, the making of gunpowder and of bank-notes!

Here, in this tranquil spot, where the nightingales are to be heard earlier and later in the year than in any other part of England, where the first bursting of the buds is seen in Spring; where no rigour of seasons can ever be felt; where everything seems formed for precluding the very thought of wickedness; here has the devil fixed on as one of the seats of his grand manufactory; and perverse and ungrateful man not only lends him his aid, but lends it cheerfully. As to the gunpowder, indeed, we might get over that. In some cases that may be innocently, and, when it sends the lead at the hordes that support a tyrant, meritoriously employed. The alders and the willows, therefore, one can see, without so much regret, turned into powder by the waters of this valley; but the bank-

notes! To think that the springs, which God has commanded to flow from the sides of these happy hills, for the comfort and the delight of man—to think that these springs should be perverted into means of spreading misery over a whole nation!

I jolted along the uneven road to the hostelry where, from experience, I knew I should be well treated. Be it known to all good cyclists that there is in the village of Farnham a neat and clean inn where an excellent bed and breakfast can be obtained for three shillings. If this mine host can thrive on such a tariff, why not all? Putting up my machine in the dry coach-house, I partook of a scanty lunch, on principle, and afterwards proceeded to find Cobbett's grave.

There is no more pleasant village in England for an afternoon stroll in the blazing sunshine. Not even a Scotchman could find fault with the cake-shops, and there is always a plentiful supply of fruit on hand. You stand in the market-place and look up the picturesque hill at the old castle above the cedars, and think what a happy man the Bishop of Winchester must be to have such lodgment. On this particular August afternoon a fine and inspiring touch was given to the scene by a regiment of Lancers riding up the hill. Farnham has an unmistakable spice of Aldershot about it; the well-dressed, smart-looking men with bronzed faces and fierce moustachios who gaze at you sternly, almost witheringly, until you feel quite ashamed of your untidy, dusty cycling costume, are officers of Queen Victoria. But you take heart of grace when you remember that the bicycle has now become a part of the equipment (in peace-time at any rate) of the British Army.

Cobbett's grave is easy to find. It is covered with a rectangular monument enclosed in ugly iron palings; on either side of the inscription is a conventional inverted torch, the only attempt at ornament. As the inscription is fast disappearing I thought it would be well to write it down, and, as the children in the school-house were singing a merry chorus in their shrill treble voices, I copied the words:

Beneath this stone lie the remains of WILLIAM COBBETT, son of George and Ann Cobbett. Born in the parish of Farnham, 9th March, 1762. Enlisted into the 54th regiment of foot in 1784, of which regiment he became sergeant-major in 1785, and obtained his discharge in 1791. In 1794 he became a political writer, in 1832 was returned to parliament for the borough of Oldham and represented it till his death, which took place at Normandy Farm in the adjoining parish of Ash on the—

The date cannot be deciphered, but Cobbett died on June 17th, 1835. On a wall inside the church there is a marble tablet erected to his memory by his colleague in Parliament, one John Fielden. The tablet is worth seeing because it contains what surely must be an admirable likeness, carved in relief; it exactly corresponds to one's preconceived notions as to the appearance of the sturdy old Radical. There was not even a wild flower by the grave, so I could only gather a few blades of grass for the Schoolmaster, who, on my return at eventide, seized them reverently and said, with a tenderness that I had not given him credit for, that he would preserve them between the leaves of his copy of the *ADVICE TO YOUNG MEN*.

## THE TREASURY-OFFICER'S WOOING.

BY CECIL LOWIS.

### CHAPTER I.

FOR those endowed with the true genius for unsociability there are few places better suited for the free cultivation of that absorbing art than the head-quarters of some of the more outlying subdivisions of Upper Burmah; and it may safely be said that there were, in the year of grace 1890, few who availed themselves of the facilities for seclusion afforded them in the interior of that newly annexed province more strenuously than did Rupert Waring, Assistant-Commissioner, late of the Burmah Police, whom fate, working through the medium of a paternal Government, had deposited two years prior to the events to be narrated on these pages, at Minmyo, a village on the river Chindwin, not far from the Manipur frontier.

Whatever may have been said in favour of this station (and that it had its compensations no one with an eye for beauty could deny) there had never been found a man with the hardihood to describe it as a delectable place of sojourn for individuals of a gregarious habit. Time was when there were three Europeans at Minmyo, when lawn-tennis was not unknown, and the skippers of the stern-wheelers used to regulate their runs so as to form the fourth at the weekly rubber in the miniature Sub-divisional mess. But that was in the good old days immediately after the annexation, before quiet had been established throughout the greater part of the country, and while the gorges of the Chindwin still re-echoed

to the bugle-call of regular troops. In process of time, when the bitterness of the British incursion had faded somewhat from the minds of the people of the land, and the odds in favour of a white man's being riddled with thumb-lengths of telegraph-wire, if he showed himself unattended five miles from home, had dwindled to near the vanishing point, the Military were withdrawn from Minmyo, the tennis-court retired under a rank growth of weeds, and eventually the English Police-Inspector, the last companion in exile left to the Assistant-Commissioner, was replaced by a Burman head-constable with a redundant corporation and a character to retrieve. A fortnight after this transfer of officers had been effected, the Assistant-Commissioner attempted to commit suicide, fortunately without success (for he was ever an indifferent marksman), and must needs then proceed to the head-quarters of the district to report the matter, and to assure the Deputy-Commissioner that nothing on earth would persuade him to live another day by himself in such a "desolate God-forsaken hole" as Minmyo. His statement was ridiculed, but he stood firm, threatening resignation and defying the wrath of the powers that were; and Waring, who, at this juncture, had just left the Police for the Commission and was eating his heart out as Assistant-Magistrate in one of the seaport towns of Lower Burmah, had no difficulty in getting his urgent request to be sent to Minmyo granted. Thus it was that our friend was the

sole European occupant of the stockaded fort at Minmyo on a certain day towards the end of November when he received by the weekly runner from head-quarters a communication which may be looked upon as the first link in a (for him, memorable) chain of events.

The letter in question met his eye as he entered his office that morning at the commencement of his day's work. In itself it was a very uninteresting-looking document, and the sight of it, as it lay on his table amid a heap of official missives, elicited from Waring nothing more than a petulant grunt. For what is known as a "demi-official," or "d-o," from his Deputy-Commissioner ordinarily meant an enumeration of matters to which he was expected to devote his "immediate personal attention" at his Subdivisional head-quarters; and, with the cold weather in, our recluse was pining to quit the isolation of Minmyo for the still greater solitude of camp-life, and by no means appreciated the idea of having to defer his exodus merely to conduct some unprofitable enquiry or frame some futile report.

To the casual observer the Assistant-Commissioner did not present the appearance of the unsociable individual he was popularly supposed to be. In his eyes, as they wandered round the bleak, dusty office, there was a kindly lustre, and his mouth, when it relaxed, as it did when he gazed away from the papers before him towards the blue river and the rustling tree-tops, had a lurking gleam of good fellowship in the corners. It was only when his head,—a close-cropped, determined head—was bent over his work, when his brow was contracted and his lips compressed under his straggling moustache, that he seemed to justify the imputation of unsociability. He certainly was

frowning gloomily enough this morning when, after reading his other correspondence, he picked up his chief's letter, and, if anything, the furrows on his forehead deepened after he had grasped its contents. They were as follows:

*Tatkin, November 21st.*

MY DEAR WARING,—The Commissioner thinks, that, as you have not yet passed in Treasury, it would be best for you to come in to head-quarters for a month or two to learn Treasury work. Stevens will relieve you at Minmyo on Wednesday next. You had better come on down here as soon as possible after you have made over charge. Formal orders transferring you and Stevens will issue later, but please act in anticipation of them. I am sorry that you should have to turn out of Minmyo, where I know you are very happy, but, as you know, you've got to get the Treasury business through. I hardly think you will go back to Minmyo before your leave is due.—Yours sincerely, J. B. SMART.

For a long time after he had gathered the substance of the letter Waring sat staring fixedly at the sheet he held in his hand; then he looked up and away, and for a further space allowed his eyes to rest on the view that was visible from below the flap of bamboo matting which served as a shelter and screen to the window, and now stood propped open at a convenient angle by a pole. Finally he rose, and, walking to the window, looked out, as though to take in to its utmost limits the prospect which stretched before his eyes. Certainly the "God-forsaken hole" was, if a dungeon, a beautiful one. Far below, between the silver-grey trunks of the trees that clothed the hill on which the fort was built, glimpses could be caught of the thatched roofs and carved gables of Minmyo, dotted here and there amid the dark verdure that fringed the river's edge. On one side of the village was a broad expanse of rice-land, green and even as a billiard-

table, bounded on the east by a thick belt of jungle, lifting tier on tier, in thicker and ever thicker masses, up the rising ground behind. Between the cultivated level and the jungle a row of snow-white pagodas gleamed, and hard by a smooth sheet of water gave back the azure of the November sky overhead. On the other side flowed the waters of the Chindwin, and beyond the steep sandy bank and tufted grass of the further shore the plain rolled away westward, with never a break, to the foot of the distant hills, a rugged blue chain, crested all along, like a summer sea, with breakers of fleecy cloud. A narrow path, which showed here and there through the undergrowth on the hill-side at his feet, marked the line of communication between the fort and the village below. Here it traversed the high river-bank near the landing-stage of the fort; further down it crossed a rough wooden bridge that spanned a little winding tributary of the main stream; and anon it disappeared through the stockade of teak logs into the village precincts. A very ordinary path it was, leading to a very ordinary Burmese hamlet, altogether a scene possessing no features that were not of common occurrence in the Province, but one which would have stirred to its depths the soul of many a man less open to Nature's appeals than Waring. To the hermit of Minmyo every detail of the landscape was as well-known and as well-loved as a two years' residence in the place could render it. Who so well as he could tell where exactly the different villages of his charge,—their presence barely indicated by the shimmer of a pagoda, or the sparkle on the roof of a monastery—nestled on the plain? Where it was that the high-sterned boats and bamboo rafts lay by his own village in the dry weather, and where they

clustered during the rains? In what directions the best snipe-grounds stretched, and at precisely what spot, far down on the river, the weekly steamer from civilisation below was first to be looked for, a black speck crawling on the shining water? For him, as for the sage of Weissnichtwo, it was true sublimity to dwell on high and from his watch-tower in the fort, as from the attic of the Wahagasse, to see a portion, at least, of the "placid life-circulation" of his own Subdivision. Here alone he was really happy.

And now he was to leave all this behind him, in all probability never to return. His successor, Stevens, a young civilian with a soul that soared above meagre arithmetical details, had, he knew well, not been successful as a Treasury-Officer; and our exile felt pretty sure that, once down at Tatkin, some pretext or other would be found for keeping him at District head-quarters till he went on leave in March. As the certainty that he was shortly to bid a long farewell to his first independent charge grew slowly upon him, he found himself wondering whether among his predecessors there had been a single one who had truly regretted leaving Minmyo for good. Not one, he was sure, and yet for him, though none of his friends would have believed it, the parting from the place, where in solitude he had mused away so many happy hours, was tinged with real regret. In Minmyo he had found those restful tranquil surroundings that elsewhere he had ever looked for in vain; and as he stood there, gazing over the sunlit prospect, the idea of Tatkin and semi-civilisation seemed anything but alluring. Tatkin meant polo and lawn-tennis and whist, and to these he had no objection; but it also meant the distracting presence of two ladies, if not three (for he remembered now that Smart, or one of

the other men, had got a sister stopping with him,) and from the thought of female society Waring recoiled with all the horror of a celibate recluse. "If it were not for the women," he said to himself, "it would not be so bad." But as it was, it really was rather hard having to turn out like this.

But there was no use repining. The work of the day had to be done, whether this was to be his last week in Minmyo or not. He collected himself with an effort, and, withdrawing his gaze from the distant hill-tops, brought his eyes and mind to bear on his more immediate surroundings. He moved to another window and looked out into the fort-enclosure. Near the court-house, in the centre of the sunny open space that lay between it and the stockade, squatted three despondent Burmans handcuffed, with leg-irons round their dusty ankles. Behind them, in the protecting shade of the bamboo barracks, lounged two Sikh policemen with fixed bayonets, chatting in a husky undertone, while a third stood at ease beside them, half in and half out of the sun, with a white, watchful eye on the three prisoners. As they observed the gaze of the Assistant-Commissioner fixed upon them, the guard stood to attention with that deprecating air of self-consciousness that always characterises a native of India when he suddenly finds himself the object of a European's interest. Waring turned to his head-clerk, a thin, hollow-cheeked Arakanese, who had entered the office and now stood by his side with a bundle of papers for signature.

"Are those the Gyobin dacoits out there?" he asked, indicating with a finger the three delinquents who hung their heads before the Magistrate's regard and fidgeted with their fetters.

"Yes, your Honour. Your Honour fixed to-day for the case."

"Have all the witnesses come?"

"Yes, your Honour; only two not yet arrived."

"Where are they? Why haven't they come? They had summonses to attend and give evidence, hadn't they?"

"Yes, your Honour; but Gyobin headman reports that he was unable to find this morning at the time he collected the witnesses. He considers that, through fear, they have run away."

"Oh, he considers so, does he? Well, send him straight back to Gyobin and tell him that if he doesn't turn up with those witnesses some time this afternoon, he will have to look out for squalls. Trot out those that are here. I will try the case to-day."

"But your Honour," pleaded the clerk, "it is ten miles to Gyobin and——"

"All the more reason that he should start directly," rejoined the stern Assistant-Commissioner. "Tell him what I said;" and ten minutes later the prisoners had been marched into the office, the headman of Gyobin had left at a hurried double for his village, and Waring had forgotten all about his impending transfer from Minmyo in the task of eliciting facts, relevant and irrelevant, from an exceedingly agitated but stubborn Burmese dame, the principal witness in the dacoity case he was committing to Sessions, who was making a gallant effort to reconcile her instant recognition of the prisoners as three of the men who had pulled her hair and taken her rupees, with the damaging fact that (according to her own and her husband's admission) she had kept her face glued to the bamboo flooring and had never once dared to look up at the dacoits during their unwelcome visit.

Ten days later Waring had left Minmyo for good.



## CHAPTER II.

THE sun had set in a crimson halo of cloud, and polo was just over at Tatkin. The players were lying in the long arm-chairs that thrice a week fringed the margin of the polo-ground, discussing the good points of their own and the bad of their companion's play, while they regaled themselves with whisky and soda-water and cheroots, and Waring, with his booted feet almost on a level with his head and an irreproachable Trichinopoly cigar between his teeth, had for the past five minutes been assuring himself that existence at Tatkin was, after all, likely to be a good deal more tolerable than he had expected. He had arrived about noon of the same day, and it must therefore be admitted that his prospective appreciation of the good things that a just and discerning providence had in store for him at the District head-quarters was based more on a consciousness of the merits that were to earn their due reward than on any actual personal experience; but this fact did not render him any the less certain that it would require no very great effort to enable him to enjoy himself at Tatkin reasonably well. His duties, so far, had consisted in reporting his arrival to the Deputy-Commissioner, who, in the throes of his monthly statements, seemed to Waring to grudge the ten minutes' interview that the fitness of things required of him, and hurried on impatiently to his final exhortation, which was to proceed to the Treasury as early as possible and try to get some order into the chaos that Stevens had, with a thoughtful perception of the weakness of new brooms for hard work, left behind him. It was to his predecessor at Tatkin and his successor at Minmyo that Waring's thoughts had now wandered, and his musings evidently aroused humorous memories,

for a gleam of laughter that passed across his face, as he lay back silent in his chair, attracted the attention of Mullintosh, the Policeman, who was reclining next to him, his rubicund face shining with a steady radiance through the fast gathering twilight.

"Now then, Grumpy," the latter asked, heaving his huge body slowly round in his chair, "what are you laughing at? Keeping your jokes to yourself as usual, I see. Minmyo doesn't seem to have loosened that tongue of yours."

"I was thinking," said Waring, with his eyes fixed on the western glow, "of Stevens's face as I left him standing on the bank at Minmyo this morning. Poor beggar, he was just the picture of misery. 'Pon my soul, I really thought he was going to cry; he looked so utterly desolate and lost perched up there on the bank under the police-station in the middle of the crowd of jabbering Burmans."

"Ah, to be sure," said Mullintosh. "Welsh told me all about it when I came down to the boat to meet you. Did you hear that, you chaps?" he continued turning to his neighbours. "It must have been the rarest fun. 'When shall I see you again, skipper?' shouts out young Stevens as they were putting off from the bank. 'Next week, I suppose.' 'Don't you be too bloomin' sure, my son,' bellows Welsh back. 'Snags between here and Tatkin are terrible bad, as you know, and that Minywa crossing is filling up as fast as fast. May do another run or two with luck before the water falls, but don't you fret your gizzard if you don't see me for another six months.' 'Great Scott!' shouts Stevens, staring like a stuck pig out of the boat. 'You're not going to leave me here all the cold weather by myself!' 'That's about the size of it,' yells Walsh just as they got out of hearing; I never saw the old sinner so pleased in my

life before. He swears he could see Stevens's white face on the bank when they turned the corner three miles down the river."

"We shall have him down here overland before the month is over," said Sparrow, the Engineer, "on his knees to Smart praying to be taken away. It'll be a case of Trumble over again, you see. How you managed to stand it so long, Waring, I can't imagine. They really ought to send another European up there."

"So they're going to," observed Smart, the Deputy-Commissioner, from the depths of his chair. "I spoke about it the other day to Colonel Davys, and he said he'd see that a European Inspector was posted there without delay. Stevens knew that right enough, for I told him before he left. Friend Welsh must have been romancing."

"A European Inspector, dear me, to think of that! Nice society for you when you go back, Waring," said Heriot, the Forest-Officer, gazing serenely at the sky through his single eye-glass. He was a gaunt man with a clean-cut regular face and a sprinkling of grey in his dark hair. "To think of that!" he repeated softly. "Double dummy whenever you feel so inclined, and somebody to argue with and confute when you have one of your loquacious seizures on. You will like that, dear boy, won't you?"

"You bet," grunted the unsociable one, whose love of a rubber was as much a bye-word as his taciturnity, and a chorus of laughter was going round the chairs when the ladies of the Station appeared on the scene and brought the men to their feet. At their approach the habitual whist-players detached themselves from the throng and edged away, murmuring confidentially, to the club-house. Waring observed the manœuvre and for a moment was tempted to fly with

these kindred spirits; but, as he wavered, the consciousness came over him that some notable act was expected of him on his first day at Tatkin, and he decided to stop and face the fiery ordeal, which he reflected would have to be undergone in any case, sooner or later. Two of the three new comers he knew. Of Mrs. Sparrow, a large husky lady several years older than her gentle spouse, he preserved a vivid recollection; and his acquaintance with Mrs. Jones, a cheerful, black-eyed daughter of the country, who had recently been led to the altar by a serious young Inspector of Police, was of several years' standing. The third lady he had never seen before, but even had he not just learned that Smart's sister was staying with him, he would have had no difficulty in recognising her by the likeness she bore to her brother, who had just tramped solemnly off at the head of the whist-players. She had not his exceedingly *retroussé* nose, but the eyes and mouth (which were not Smart's worst features) were, as Waring had leisure during the next few minutes to observe, identical in brother and sister; and the way in which she carried her neat little well-poised head, on which Smart's ruddy locks were reproduced in a chastened shade of auburn, reminded him to the life of the sturdy Deputy-Commissioner. It seemed to Waring, as he took her slowly in, that this was certainly a personable young woman, and the general impression conveyed by her dainty exterior was quite in keeping with the other unexpectedly pleasurable sensations he had been experiencing since his arrival in Tatkin. He felt inclined to attribute his feelings, so far as Miss Smart was concerned, to his protracted absence from the softening influence of feminine intercourse; but at the same

time he could not blind himself to the fact that the other ladies of the Station were in his eyes every whit as uninteresting, and appealed to him as little, as when he had seen them last, two or three months before ; and this knowledge so impressed him that he took the earliest opportunity of asking Mrs. Jones, near whom he found himself standing, to introduce him to the Deputy-Commissioner's sister.

"Fancy your wanting to be introduced to anybody, Mr. Waring ; this is something quite new," giggled the dusky lady. However she performed the ceremony of introduction readily enough. "Miss Smart," she said. "Let me introduce you to Mr. Waring, the gentleman who has just arrived from Minmyo."

Miss Smart looked with a shy kindly smile towards the gentleman who had just arrived from Minmyo. She was sitting between Mullintosh and Heriot, listening with a meek resignation to the Police-Officer's vociferous utterances, and seemed glad enough of a diversion.

"How do you do, Mr. Waring ?" she said. "Won't you come and sit down here?" and she pointed to an unoccupied seat opposite her. "You arrived this morning, I believe, didn't you? You must find this a great change after Minmyo."

"A very great change," said Waring taking the proffered chair ; "and a very pleasant one," he added. A minute before the poor recluse had felt fountains of small talk spouting up within him, but now that he was placed in the sight of all beholders near the Deputy-Commissioner's sister, every conceivable topic of conversation faded treacherously from his mind and, to his dismay, he found himself staring hard at his boots with never a word to say, and with a terrible tingling perception that the assembled

company, marvelling at this unparalleled outburst of sociability on his part, were hanging on his lips. Through all, however, asserted itself a feeling that he could not possibly be less in his element than Heriot, who had hitherto been, like himself, consistent in his strict avoidance of ladies' society. It was a relief to him to find that Mullintosh was quite prepared to carry on the thread of conversation.

"Don't you believe him, Miss Smart," the Policeman was exclaiming. "He would go back to Minmyo to-morrow if he could. He's going to get a grant of land and settle down there when he retires."

"Is it such a delightful place, then?" asked Miss Smart.

"Oh it's not so bad when you're there," said Waring, still regarding his boots ; "wonderfully pretty and picturesque and all that, and not so very unhealthy at this time of year, but lonely of course."

"I've never been there," observed the Deputy-Commissioner's sister. "Of course I haven't had time yet to do more than see one or two places near here ; but Jack promised to take me to Minmyo during the cold weather. I should so much like to see how Mr. Stevens gets on up there. I can't imagine him by himself, poor young man, in a lonely District."

"Subdivision," corrected Mrs. Jones.

"Oh, Subdivision, is it? I never can distinguish between Districts and Subdivisions and Divisions. They all seem much the same to me."

"They're all different names for exactly the same thing really," said Mullintosh. "You pays your money and you takes your choice. You'll have to go up with the Deputy-Commissioner Sahib and cheer Stevens up, Miss Smart. He's terribly down in his luck, whatever your brother may say to the contrary."

"I should love to see the place," said the young lady addressed.

"Well, Miss Smart," drawled Heriot, "if I were you, and intended visiting Minmyo, I should send our poor young man timely notice, so that if, like some of his predecessors, he has designs on his own life, he may stay his hand till after you have been there."

"What do you mean? Don't be horrid! You don't really mean to say——"

"I mean to say," said Heriot, fixing his eye-glass with bland deliberation, "that the last man at Minmyo tried to—well—in fact, tried to make two young men happy."

"What two young men?"

"The men below him in the gradation list. It was his first year; there were only two."

"You mean that he tried to commit suicide?"

"Exactly, but failed. Nice young man he was too, but never could succeed in anything he put his hand to. He's Treasury-Officer in Tenasserim somewhere now."

"I don't believe you," exclaimed Ethel. "Is that true, Mr. Waring?" she added addressing the new arrival. "I never know when Mr. Heriot is speaking the truth."

"Perfectly true," Waring made answer.

"But—weren't you the last? I mean—it wasn't you, was it?"

"Of course it was," put in the irrepressible Mullintosh. "You can see the white scar under his chin still where he tried to cut his throat," and he pointed with a tragic gesture towards Waring, while Heriot lay back in his chair and polished his eye-glass deprecatingly. He was a trifle short-sighted and the joke was lost upon him.

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Ethel; "that's the mark of Mr. Waring's

chin-strap, where the sun hasn't burnt him. What do you all mean?"

"It was my predecessor," said Waring; "a young chap fresh out from home. The solitude preyed on his mind, and——"

Miss Smart gave a little shudder. "Don't talk about it please," she said. "But you say he didn't succeed?"

"No, he failed."

"How dreadful!"

"Quite true," said Heriot solemnly, "Really, when one considers that Trumble was an able-bodied man, and had a second-class dispensary and a whole battery of small arms at his disposal, *dreadful* is the only word one can use. One begins to despair of——"

"Reminds one of the old story about the duel between the Englishman and the Frenchman," said Mullintosh. "You've heard it, I suppose, Miss Smart? The one who threw lowest with the dice was to blow out his brains; Frenchman loses,—goes out of room,—sound of shot heard—you must know the story; Frenchman comes back presently and apologises. 'Pardon,' he says; I have had ze misfortune to miss myself."

"You've no right to joke about so serious a matter," exclaimed Miss Smart. "It's very wrong, Mr. Heriot," and she turned indignantly to the individual named, who with his eye-glass focussed and his head slightly on one side, was carefully scrutinising an imaginary crack in his polo-stick.

"My dear Miss Smart," he replied, "far be it from me to joke about anything so serious. I am as concerned as you are yourself at Mr. Mullintosh's flippancy."

"Oh you are quite incorrigible; you can talk nothing but nonsense today," cried the girl, rising as in desperation, though her mouth twitched indulgently. "Mrs. Sparrow, do you

feel inclined to come to the club and look at the papers?"

And they all with one accord rose and wandered slowly towards the rickety bamboo shanty that did duty as a club at Tatkin. As they fared over the hard sun-dried turf Waring felt his arm grasped by Mullintosh, and the two fell back into the rear of the party.

"Easy on, old man," exclaimed the Policeman. "I'm as stiff as a poker after the polo, and that old wound in my leg is bothering me again. I can't walk as fast as these young things; give me an arm, will you?"

They dropped behind and presently Mullintosh thrust his red face up to Waring's. "Do you see 'em?" he asked with a chuckle, indicating by a motion of his head Miss Smart, who, despite her invitation to Mrs. Sparrow, was walking apart both from that lady and the rest of the little company with Heriot by her side.

"Yes," said Waring.

"Come out, hasn't he, since you saw him last?"

"Perhaps."

"Sweet on him as she can be," pursued the Policeman inconsequently.

"Is she?"

"Yes; you must have noticed it. Lazy sarcastic beast, doesn't care a bit for her, I can see. Funny, for she's not a bad 'un, take her all round."

"Ah!" said Waring.

"Not a little bit. Funny go, altogether."

"Oh!" said Waring.

### CHAPTER III.

It generally surprises the reflective traveller, for whose information life up-country has been exhaustively summed up in Rangoon as an existence wholly devoid of material comforts, to learn, on penetrating north-

ward, what degrees of up-countriness there are, and how much everything, even in the more remote and outlandish tracts of Upper Burmah, goes by comparison. This knowledge is anything but new to the residents of the interior. Those who have sat on a camp-stool and eaten off the lid of an office-box for a month together, understand what it is to look upon a table, even when guiltless of a cloth, as almost a luxury, and an easy chair, though of the roughest, as savouring of voluptuousness; but even for the habitual dweller in the wilderness the ample variation in the standards of comfort up-country brings with it at times a sort of mild surprise. Fastidious lowlanders, fresh from the delights and dissipations of Rangoon, were wont to scoff not a little at the sight of the unkempt exterior of the Tatkin club; yet it seemed to Waring, even while he clambered the rickety stair to the verandah and saw the undulations of the floor quiver before him, that the building was an amazingly respectable erection, and he could only marvel now that he should ever have regarded it so slightly as he did on his first arrival from Lower Burmah. Mullintosh still hung heavily on his arm as he followed on the skirts of the little party from the polo-ground, and, when the club was reached, was not long in guiding his footsteps to the bar, behind which two dingy Madrassah in faded raiment flitted to and fro, sustaining with whiskey and soda-water and dubious cocktails the male portion of the community. The tropical night had set swiftly in, and the whitewashed walls, lit up but meagrely by a poor half dozen lamps, were yet bright and enticing after the outer gloom. Those of the men who were not playing whist were for the most part grouped in the proximity of the bar, engaged in desultory talk. Beyond

them, in the little reading-room, the ladies, with a few of their immediate followers, might have been seen gathered round a wooden table littered with a wealth of periodicals, for the most part illustrated, of ancient date. At these a casual glance was from time to time thrown; but here, snatches of conversation, rather more subdued, though in no wise less animated than in the quarter monopolised by the men, was a sign to the initiated that the weekly mail, with its budget of newspapers, had not yet arrived. Heriot was there, still at Miss Smart's elbow, and the recollection of Mullintosh's words, as they were on their way to the club, invested Waring's gaze in the direction of the couple in the reading-room with newly-awakened interest. To the average observer it would certainly have seemed as though what the Policeman had said about the girl was true. She was sitting at the table, playing listlessly with the leaves of *THE GRAPHIC* on which her gaze was bent; but though her eyes were on the printed page her mind was elsewhere, for at each fresh remark of Heriot's there was a light on her face, brighter than any that the lamps could cast. Even Waring, unskilled as he was to read the subtle language of the lip and eye, could see that every word that issued from the mouth of the keen-faced man who sat, tenderly stroking his riding-boots, at her side was more to Miss Smart than she would probably have cared to confess. Whether or not Heriot justified the strictures indulged in by Mullintosh in his regard it was impossible for Waring to say. It was clear that though he made no effort to cultivate it, he did not dislike the girl's society; but beyond this nothing could have been divined of his feelings and thoughts by a judge far more astute than the new arrival from Minmyo. Waring's essay to plumb

the depths of the Forest-Officer's impassive face failed utterly, and as he turned his puzzled gaze away he caught Mullintosh's eye, which was momentarily obscured by a wink of profound comprehension. The burly Policeman had seated himself at a small round table close to the bar with a long tumbler in front of him, and had also been looking at the enigmatic pair. He raised his glass to Waring as a gleam of intelligence shot across the latter's face, and as he replaced it empty on the table, winked again with even more meaning than before.

The Treasury-Officer turned away, with an involuntary smile, to Sparrow, and at the request of that admirable officer plunged into a description of the state of the Minmyo village bridge, which had been built a few years before by local labour and at an absurdly low rate under the supervision of the headman, and had, in the opinion of pitying experts, been in a parlous condition for the past six months. The Executive Engineer, who had a fine professional contempt for the structure, and would only refer to it in compassionate "demi-officials" and in casual conversation at the club, had had the materials for a noble Departmental bridge on his hands for nearly a year, and was a trifle perturbed to learn from Waring what vitality the existing erection still possessed. Disappointed in this regard, he soon guided the conversation with unofficial directness to other more promising non-Departmental works in the Subdivision, and presently Waring found that the first rubber was over and that Smart had joined them from the whist-room.

"Dine with us to-night, Waring, will you?" said the Deputy-Commissioner. "Eight o'clock sharp," and his invitation having been accepted with almost equal brevity, he passed on



briskly into the reading-room and in a minute or two had gathered his sister to him and departed, a sturdy, strenuous figure, into the darkness.

Heriot rose languidly as his fair companion was swept away and approached the bar, after a deliberate survey through his glass of the company assembled. He stopped in front of Waring and looked at him for a moment in silence. "Have another drink, Waring?" he said presently. "No? Well, come and dress for dinner, then."

"I'm dining at Smart's this evening," replied Waring.

"I know; I heard Smart say so. I'm dining there myself to-night, and I was told to see that you were not late."

"Why should they think I was going to be late?"

"I told them you would be. I said you hadn't unpacked or settled down yet."

"I like your cheek. My boy is unpacking now; I shall be ready as soon as you are, you see. Come along."

"Where are you sneaking off to, Waring?" exclaimed Mullintosh as the two, on their way to the door, passed him at his table.

"I'm off to dress for dinner."

"Rubbish! You've heaps of time still. Dinner's not till a quarter past eight. You must have another gin and bitters before you go."

"I'm dining with Smart," explained Waring.

"Oh, you are, are you? Then go, my son, in peace, and try and behave yourself. Is Heriot dining there too?"

"Yes."

"You don't say so! No fun for you then. Take care of him, and don't let him stop too long."

"Fine delicately-minded individual that," observed Heriot grimly as the two stepped out of the club, and no

further word was spoken until they reached the Civil Mess, which housed under its sombre shingled roof nearly the whole of the bachelor portion of the little community.

It has been asserted, by those in India who are qualified to form an opinion, that a transfer from one Station to another is ordinarily as disastrous, from a pecuniary point of view, as a fire; and in the case of married officers, and of those of the unmarried to whom real comfort is essential, there is a good deal of truth in the assertion. For the average bachelor in the East, however, a move does not usually have so calamitous an effect. Certainly there was nothing in Waring's rooms to show that his transfer was at all likely to prejudice him financially. His quarters in the Civil Mess consisted of two rooms, an office in front, and a bedroom behind. In the former stood a solid teak-wood table, covered with a gaudy native cloth, two of a trio of rickety, unvarnished, cane-bottomed chairs, a rattan lounge, and a book-case. The centre of the latter was occupied by a camp-bedstead, decked with well-patched mosquito-curtains and flanked by the third of the chairs, equally with the others in an advanced state of decrepitude. The blank teak face of one of the bedroom-walls was partly hidden by a jail-made wardrobe, and close to this straddled a collapsible washing-stand. Beyond this the quarters were bare of furniture. The bed, washing-stand, and lounge Waring had brought with him from Minmyo, and they had formed a modest load for the single able-bodied cooly who had carried them up from the steamer. The balance of the fittings he had purchased for the sum of thirty rupees from Stevens, to whom he had made over all his non-portable belongings at Minmyo for a sum slightly in excess of the above.

A smoky wall-lamp was burning in the bedroom when Waring entered, to find his boy, a sleek shifty Madrassi, resplendent in a scarlet and gold *puggree*, emptying his boxes of their contents, already knee-deep in a welter of *kharki* clothing, flannel shirts, cigars, enamelled ironware and books, from which some kind genius had prompted him to extract the where-withal to array his master for dinner; and in a reasonably short space of time Waring was ready.

On strolling round to Heriot's quarters in order to show that his unpacking had not interfered with his dressing, he found the owner lying at full length on his camp-bed being shampooed by one of his Burman boys, while the other was languidly inserting a set of gold studs in a white shirt, stopping every now and then to indulge in a furtive puff at a fat white cheroot that lay on the floor beside him.

"Not time to start yet," observed Heriot slowly opening his eyes as Waring bore down upon him from his office. "Ten minutes more and I'll be ready. That'll do, Shwe Hlaw. Now then, Po San, give me that shirt, if you've quite finished pawing it about. Throw that cheroot away, you fool; you'll be dirtying the front. Sit down, Waring; I'll be ready in a moment."

Waring did not sit down, but prowled silently about the room with his hands in his waistcoat pockets (he was not used to waistcoats) while Heriot's toilet was being completed, glancing now at the two Burmans as they struggled with their master's raiment, now at the nick-nacks that decorated the walls and tables. There was an air of comfort about the room, which contrasted strongly with the bareness he had left behind him at the further end of the mess-house. The furniture was better in quality

than what is ordinarily met with in bachelors' quarters in Upper Burmah. There were *dhurries* on the plank floor and a picture or two on the walls; a trophy of red-tufted Chin spears hung near the door, which was draped with a brilliant green and yellow Indian *purdah*, and the dressing-table and a writing-table near the window were covered with photographs of young men and maidens, the latter preponderating. It was before one of these last that Waring stopped, after a short perambulation, to give vent to the first remark that he had vouchsafed since he entered the room. Heriot's head was in his shirt when Waring spoke, his arms were working convulsively, and he had to have the question repeated to him after he had emerged rustling.

"I asked you who that was," said Waring. He pointed, as he spoke, to the portrait which had attracted his attention. It was the photograph of a delicately featured girl with fine eyes, a weak mouth and an exquisite neck, which showed to advantage against a dark background and a still darker evening-dress.

Heriot wrestled awhile in silence with a stubborn neck-stud. "It is a Miss Dudley Devant," he said presently. "Po San, my white tie. How often have I told you, you yellow-faced baboon, that you're not to keep your private store of *pice* in my collar-box? Take them away."

"Dudley Devant," said Waring musingly; "where have I heard that name recently?" But Heriot made no attempt to help him and he was left to ransack the recesses of his memory in vain. It could hardly, he pondered, have been mentioned to him at Minmyo. He had seen no one there to speak of, for months, and he could recall the details of all the conversations he had had there in which the name of the girl with the

long white neck could possibly have occurred. Nor had any one referred to it in his presence since his arrival at Tatkin. And yet for all that before his eyes stood the words *Dudley Devant, Muriel—No—Millicent Dudley Devant*. He was certain now that he had seen them before,—seen them, not heard them. It might have been in a newspaper; it must have been,—and yet——

Heriot slipped into his coat and the two descended the steps and strolled across to where the lights of the Deputy - Commissioner's bungalow shone in the distance. The air was warm and still; the new moon was

setting dreamily down behind the dark line of western hills, and the whole atmosphere throbbed with the melody of the cicadas. One of Heriot's Burman boys was plodding in front of them along the dusty track swinging a hurricane-lantern, the light from which shone fitfully on the black and white of their evening-dress, assumed in Miss Smart's honour.

"Not Millicent Dudley Devant," said Waring suddenly.

"To be sure," said Heriot; and then after a pause he added, "How the devil did you know?"

But Waring could not enlighten him.

*(To be continued.)*

GEORGE THOMSON.<sup>1</sup>

RESPECTABILITY is not itself a title to fame, and if George Thomson had been only the "highly respectable" man that Mr. Henley says he was, the dust upon his career might very well have lain unswept. But he was more than that. A man of enthusiasm, his life-long pursuit of one idea, and his dexterous bearing as self-appointed taskmaster of all the poets of his day, constitute a claim to a certain distinction. As it is, his name reflects but a pale glimmer from the glory of Robert Burns. The work of his life was merely wasted: his much-vaunted collection of Scottish song is laid on the topmost shelf; but it was through him that some of the best-esteemed of Burns's songs were written, and his biography bears for indispensable apology on the title-page, *the friend of Burns*. His connection with Burns is an old story. All the world knows how the poet, a week before his death, with the needless horror of jail before his eyes, besought Thomson "for God's sake" to send him £5, and how Thomson, sending that sum, was thereafter castigated by burly Christopher North for not sending more. The ill-odour of that transaction has hung about Thomson's name ever since; successive editors of Burns having passed on without enquiry the tradition that Thomson stinted his helpers while himself luxuriating on fat profits. It was reserved for his present, who is also his first, biographer, to dissipate the slander once for all. But even that act of piety would scarcely

justify a biography, and it is Thomson's dealings with Scott, Byron, Campbell, Beethoven, and other composers and poets (not to mention poetasters) of his time which vindicate the present volume. Their correspondence throws some new light on their own characters, on Thomson's methods as editor, and on what can only be called his manufactory of Scottish song.

Born in 1757, son of a poor Scots schoolmaster, George Thomson lived for ninety-four years and never belied his parentage. His father's salary was £9 a year, which, eked out with parish doles in relief, ending in ten shillings to help to bury his wife, disgusted him of his trade and sent him questing to Edinburgh. There he became a messenger-at-arms and forthwith disappears. Of George's early years we know nothing. Being a Scots boy, he had a decent education, and at seventeen he entered the office of a Writer to the Signet. Six years afterwards he obtained a junior clerkship in the Board of Trustees for the Encouragement of Arts and Manufactures, and in their office he spent fifty-nine years, rising by steps till he became chief clerk. His commencing salary was £40, on which, incredible as it seems, he married. He was thirty-seven before his wages touched £100; thirty years later he was earning £300, and when he retired on full pay at the age of eighty-two, the amount was £420. These particulars are of vital importance in his story.

His life was mainly uneventful; but there are one or two incidents which lend colour to the prevailing

<sup>1</sup> GEORGE THOMSON, THE FRIEND OF BURNS: HIS LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE; by J. Cuthbert Hadden. London, 1898.

drab. Once he came to loggerheads with the law. One evening, when his children were entertaining a dancing party, a curmudgeonly bachelor named Balvaïrd living in the flat below, irritated by the clatter of heels, sent up his maid to negotiate its cessation. With original malice, or repeating a choleric chance word of her master, she told the respectable Thomson to his face that his house was no better than what, for the sake of good manners, we will call a house of ill-fame, and was forthwith speedily ejected. Balvaïrd then sent for the police, who threatened to carry Thomson and the whole party to the watch-house if the dancing was not discontinued by ten o'clock. Thomson was unwise enough not to forget this petty squabble by the next morning. He brought two actions-at-law, one against the maid-servant for breach of the peace and slander, the other against the police-sergeant for unlawful entry. He lost them both. Then he wrote and printed a pamphlet reviewing the judge's decision, which was answered by Balvaïrd, and this paper duel might have gone on for years had not the judge been scared into resigning. On the copy of Thomson's pamphlet in the British Museum one "H. C." has pilloried the judge as "a hot-headed blockhead who . . . was lucky to get £300 a year to give up his office." Mr. Hadden's suggestion that this H. C. was Henry, Lord Cockburn, who some years later was undoubtedly a close friend of Thomson, is almost certainly right; but Cockburn's endorsement was hardly needed to justify Thomson against the "block-head" and his subordinates.

In his sixty-second year Thomson went on a visit to the continent. He wrote an account of it in a series of letters to his wife, stiff, matter-of-fact letters for the most part, in

simple language and formal phrase, with but rarely a touch of humour. Once and again we get a bit of vivid description, of which the account of his journey from Havre to Rouen may serve as a specimen. It was made, he says:

In the most clumsy wagon-like Diligence I ever saw, drawn by five horses harness'd with ropes, three in the front, and two in the rear, on one of which last sits the postillion, with powder'd hair, tied and bobbing at the neck of his short jacket all the way, his legs in a pair of immense jack-boots, and armed with a tremendous whip, in short the identical *La Fleur of Sterne* to a tittle. Away went he as if the Devil were at his heels, and no man could bestir himself more continually: he was not a moment idle, but kept wheezing, ge-hoing, *sacré-dieu-ing*, scolding, and using his whip in the most extraordinary style, seldom striking, but every crack (of which he gave a thousand at least) was like the sound of a pistol, and made the little horses throw out their legs as fast as those in our mail-coach service. . . . Off he sets with the same restless disposition and amusing jabber: nothing stops him, for there is not a sou demanded from passengers till the end of the day, not a toll on the road, and instead of tipting at every public-house, as our drivers are so much in the practice of doing, not a single stop did any of the *La Fleur* family make during the journey.<sup>1</sup>

More than once he draws a contrast between French manners and our own. There are no disgusting sights in the streets of Paris, and while he cannot believe there is any more virtue, "there is infinitely more decorum." For the rest, he takes his pleasure at the Opera, where he notes that the acting is as good as the singing: he ranges the picture-galleries of Paris and Antwerp; he admires the Haarlem organ and reproves the "ill-bred Dutch coofs" who put on their hats at the sermon;

<sup>1</sup> This passage is taken from one of Thomson's letters not quoted by Mr. Hadden.

and in the end confesses that he has seen "nothing in the slightest degree comparable to mine own romantic town," whither he returns to pursue his hobby.

For Thomson had a hobby. He played the violin, and indulged a general taste for music, being a regular attendant at those Gentlemen's Concerts of which we get a hint in *GUY MANNERING*, and singing in the choruses of Handel's and Haydn's oratorios. "Many were the times and oft," he says, "I have sung myself hoarse as a raven at 'Wretched Lovers!' 'Behold the Monster, Polypheme,' &c. I almost wept for sweet Galatea when the amorous giant hurled a rock at the head of her beloved Acis, and deaved [deafened] the whole house with my din, singing the sorrows of the young lovers." But most of all he delighted in the Scottish songs as sung by Tenducci and Signora Corri; and one fine day a tricky sprite whispered him to collect the songs of his country, purging the words of any grossness, and fitting the tunes with "accompaniments worthy of their merit." This ambitious task occupied him for half a century. At first he had coadjutors, but his resolution soaring too high a pitch, they fell off, and one drowned himself in the Forth.

Thomson's audacity was astonishing. A junior clerk at £100 a year, married and bountifully blessed by Lucina, he single-handed sought to purchase or cajole the aid of the most illustrious poets and composers of the day, offering magnificently to pay them "any reasonable sum they might demand," and actually paying the composers, at any rate, considerable sums. How he found the money is inexplicable, and his biographer, who is the first to make known his precise financial position, does not attempt to explain it.

From the first Thomson was de-

termined to make his collection a classic. Alike in music and in words his songs were to be perfection, "an honour to his name to the latest posterity." The best contemporary musicians were asked to supply accompaniments to the airs, and the best contemporary poets to replace with chaste verses, that should call no blush "to the cheek of the most virtuous maiden," the indecent rhymes to which many of the tunes were vulgarly sung. He failed, and into the causes of his failure I need not enter here. Let it suffice that after long travail he recognised his failure, and did not bemoan it beyond reason. When one of his lesser versifiers printed an ode in his honour, in which he sang Thomson as the partner of Burns in glory and an equal heritor with Shakespeare and Scott, Thomson bade him "for God's sake get the sixth verse cancelled." He showed chagrin only when rival collections were more successful than his own. Then he poured out unmeasured scorn and contumely on the "wretched doggrel," the "mangling of good verses, for what purpose Heaven knows, unless to please absolute fools," perpetrated "under the auspices of some canting old maids," whose "paltry collection is filled with the most vulgar rants ever chanted by the lowest rabble," who "have castrated all the songs in which the dangerous word *kiss* occurs," and whose editor is "a silly, tasteless, canting old seceder."

I must touch very briefly on his relations with Burns. He applied to him, early in his operations, for words to fit some of the tunes, offering to pay any reasonable price for them. Burns at once agreed to write some verses, but absolutely refused pay. When Thomson by and by spontaneously sent him a £5 note, he said that the present degraded him in his own



eyes: "As to any more traffic of that debtor and creditor kind, I swear by that Honour which crowns the upright statue of Robert Burns's integrity—on the least motion of it I will indignantly spurn the by-past transaction, and from that moment commence entire stranger to you." To another friend he said, "I'll be d—d if ever I write for money." These facts, joined with others, here for the first time brought to light, enable the biographer to make complete answer to those who have charged Thomson with taking mean advantage of Burns. He proves that when Thomson sent the dying poet the £5 which Wilson declared ought to have been more, he had actually to borrow the money. And the pages of this book furnish ample evidence that Thomson was always anxious to pay, or in some way reward his helpers, and was indeed persistent after direct rebuffs. When balked of making direct payment, Thomson sought to reward his contributors by presents of napery or muslins, pictures, books, snuff-boxes, whatever they most affected; and these must have cost money, unless perhaps the damasks and muslins were perquisites that fell to him as clerk to the Board. Even presents were not always acceptable, as Thomson found in his dealings with Joanna Baillie. That good woman, who would be called always plain *Joanna* without prefix, accepted from him a small shawl; but when he sent her a new edition of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays in fourteen volumes she returned them post-haste, reproaching him for causing her so much pain. Years later, when he talked of sending her Flaxman's illustrations of the *Iliad*, she peremptorily forbade him, hinting that another such offer would forfeit her friendship. The truth is, they one and all regarded Thomson's work in the light of a patriotic undertaking,

and gave him their verses with the utmost goodwill.

Thomson had but one way of approaching the writers whose aid he wished to enlist,—the way of undisguised, and even unctuous flattery. He kept a keen eye open for the rising stars in poetry; when he saw one, he professed to fall down and worship. He applied to Scott within a month of the publication of *THE LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL*. In the same year he begged songs of Moore, "in consequence of the very great delight I have received from the perusal of your exquisitely beautiful lyrics . . . there is scarcely a person in the kingdom to whom I could with so much propriety urge my request." "No son of the Muses," he assures Sir Alexander Boswell, "is able to match the lively airs with the felicity that runs through your humorous songs." The publication of *CHILDE HAROLD* produced an application to Byron, in making which he expressed his admiration for his lordship's lyrics, and begged that he would write some verses "for the Muse's sake," adding that his courage had repeatedly failed until his solicitude for what was best made him bold to address so great a man. Perhaps the oddest occasion for making his stereotyped request is found in relation to William Tennant, who had applied through Thomson for an appointment in a public office. He was unsuccessful, and Thomson, in returning his testimonials, consoled him by the offer of a place in his collection, ending with the queer compliment: "I am sure you can be eccentric, novel, and natural, and these are the qualities which are sure to please."

Thomson's applications were rarely altogether fruitless; when he got no verses he got letters which are sometimes quite as interesting. Byron was his greatest failure. He promised to fit words to some of the airs, but

having kept Thomson waiting for eighteen months, he then sent him a civil letter, explaining that though he really had tried to verify, he had found the task too difficult. "A bad song," he said, "would only disgrace beautiful music. I know that I could rhyme for you, but not produce anything worthy of your publication. . . . You will not suspect me of caprice nor want of inclination." When he wrote this, my lord was on the point of starting for the Doncaster races. Campbell's odd, but not unprecedented, excuse for breaking a promise was that he had married a wife, and he described his new state in terms of natural history: "The Aurelian insect has not more ado to poke his little antennæ and forepaws out of the shell, in order to gain his new state of existence, than a poor bachelor has to get out of his celibacy, and flutter about in his wedding suit. The one bursts into light and liberty, but the other!—It is too soon, however, to moralise before the honeymoon is over." Still more amusing perhaps is a letter of Moore's, in which, after making a promise (never fulfilled) to write verses for some airs he stigmatises as "particularly flippant and uninteresting," he proceeds, in reference to the onslaught on his *EPISTLES, ODES, AND POEMS*, in *THE EDINBURGH REVIEW*: "I was agreeably disappointed by the article on my volume of poems. There is all the malignity which I expected, but not half the sting; and I hope I shall always be lucky enough to have such dull prosing antagonists. Will it be too much trouble for you to answer me a question by return of post? Does Mr. Jeffrey (one of the persons mentioned in the Review) reside in Edinburgh; and is he there at present?" No one would suspect that this simple and ingenuous question was the little man's overture to

—that ever glorious, almost fatal fray,  
When Little's leadless pistol met his  
eye,  
And Bow Street myrmidons stood  
laughing by.

Though the poets were in general so ready to undertake song-writing for Thomson, they often needed a great deal of urging before they fulfilled their promises, and then were rather ashamed of the verses they wrote. Scott refers to his "tawdry stanzas," which (with fine disregard of grammar) "are not the sort of thing one solemnly puts their name to." In sending some verses Lockhart writes: "I am quite sensible that they are bad, but I can do no better. . . . I trust you will be careful not to mention my name as connected with it *to anybody whatever*." Boswell was more plain-spoken than Thomson liked. He had already hurt the fastidious editor's feelings by telling him that "people in general don't care *what* the words are, if they have words at all; anything will do to sing"; and when Thomson sent him airs that required verses of a somewhat intricate metre, he wrote that his task had "become more that of a stonecutter than a poet," and that he did not like "the name of the author to be stuck at the top in such tremendous letters." The only writers who seem to have really enjoyed their work for Thomson were the smaller fry, Hogg, Moir (Delta), David Vedder, and the rest. Hogg writes one day that he has "just dashed down a song on the slate while the carrier is engaged at his dinner," and, with his usual vanity, assures Thomson that he will find it "devilish clever and spirited." But even Hogg was sometimes out of patience with the business. "I am plagued and disgusted," he says in one letter, "with the measures you bind me to, which are neither hexameter, iambic, nor any measure that ever was heard of. Why in the world

should you measure a modern song by the rude strains of a former age which no poetical ear can ever read, however much they may suit for singing?" This lets us into the secret of some of Thomson's difficulties. He could never understand that there was any trouble in fitting new words to an old tune, though frequently his correspondents could make nothing of the tunes he sent them. Some of them, like Scott, had the radical defects of an unmusical ear and ignorance of music, and it is not surprising that these sometimes sent him heroics where octosyllables, and dactyls where cretics were required. But his main difficulties sprang from his own extraordinary notions of delicacy and of literary quality. In his first letter to Burns he wrote: "One thing only I beg, which is, that however gay and sportive the Muse may be, she will always be decent. Let her not write what beauty would blush to speak, nor wound that charming delicacy which forms the most precious dowry of our daughters." That spirit animated him through the whole of his editorial labours. He insisted on the colouring being "not too warm, please," and had no scruple about altering anything which he considered to show that defect. One of these too luscious words, notwithstanding what he had said about the canting old maids, was *kiss*! Thomson was much exercised about that simple little song beginning "Gin a body meet a body." The terrible third line, "Gin a body kiss a body," was too much for him, and he told his woe to David Moir, begging him to try his hand at an emendation. Moir very properly characterised the meddling as profanation, but since he knew that ladies would not sing about kissing, he produced the following stanza:

Gin a body meet a body  
Comin' thro' the rye,

Should a body on a body  
Gloom in passing by?

This did not please Thomson, who substituted for the last two lines:

Gin a body like a body  
Should she pass him by?

which leaves it entirely undecided what she might do if she stayed. But even this brilliant effort is eclipsed by his performance with *BLOOMING NELLY*. The last stanza of that amorous ditty runs thus:

As flies the partridge from the brake  
On fear-inspired wings,  
So Nelly starting, half awake,  
Away affrighted springs;  
But Willie followed—as he should;  
He overtook her in the wood;  
He vow'd, he pray'd; he found the  
maid  
Forgiving all and good.

The last four lines, said Thomson, would drive the ladies from the drawing-room, and he begged David Vedder to pen him a substitute. Vedder replied: "I find it impossible to improve the last four lines of the stanza and retain the first four. So therefore the whole eight lines must be lopped off the song and a new stanza written. It is the more necessary, as it looks rather daft-like for a lassie to run like a wild hare into the wood for *protection*, when she ought rather to have run to the nearest cottage. . . Here is my notion of how the song should end:

With trembling limbs and fluttering  
breast  
The beauteous maid awoke;  
And morning ne'er on mountain crest  
With half the splendour broke.  
But love sat throned in Willie's eye,  
And honour breathed in every sigh;  
She, void of guile, vouchsafed a smile  
Which empires could not buy.

I fondly hope this new stanza will enable the ladies to warble one of the

finest lyrics in existence." Vedder's lines, with their bold image and their insistence on the excellent intentions of man and maid, might have been expected to please Thomson; but he replied: "Your proposed concluding stanza for 'Nelly' is very clever, but you take away too much of the charming original. We dare not touch the simile of the partridge: 'twould be deemed sacreligious. . . On my pillow the other morning I thought of turning the stanza as follows:

As flies the partridge from the brake  
On fear-inspired wings,  
So Nelly starting, half-awake,  
Away affrighted springs.  
But Willie soon stood by her side,  
For Cupid is a speedy guide;  
He vow'd, he pray'd; he found the maid  
Content to be his bride."

This produced the following lively rejoinder from Vedder: "Will you pardon me if I speak my mind? I know you will. Then be it known to you, on the faith and honour of a versifier, your amendment will never do. Boreas with his blasts, Neptune with his waves, Venus with her smiles, Diana with her staghounds, Minerva with her wisdom, and (above all) Cupid with his darts, have all been laid in the Red Sea by that great conjuror Taste and the concurrence of mankind generally; and who may invoke them or allude to them with impunity?—None. Moreover, when we select an individual to guide us anywhere, we do not so much care for a 'speedy' guide as a safe one. Now all the namby-pambyists, from Elkanah Settle downwards, have agreed that there is not a more dangerous personage in existence than this same Cupid. Then, though he may be speedy he is not safe; ergo should not be trusted. Now then there is nothing under heaven more

tame than 'Content to be his bride.' So all things considered, 'tis better to let it remain on the borders of *double entendre* than substitute anything tame." In the end Thomson showed unusual restraint. He pencilled on Vedder's letter: "On mature consideration I decide that we must not, dare not, alter the original."

Apart from this deference to Mrs. Grundy, Thomson's critical judgments were so perverse and wooden that one wonders how his correspondents kept their tempers. Charles Dickens married his granddaughter; and the only reference to the novelist in Thomson's letters is the following on the AMERICAN NOTES: "Dickens has made a sad exposition of the filthy practice of spitting in America. I should think he has demolished it, and if so he has done them an important service." His mind was an amazing combination of shrewdness and stupidity. He saw clearly enough that simplicity is the prime requisite in a song; but of sense of rhythm, propriety, fitness of word to idea, he discovers nothing whatever. Yet he took on himself to examine "critically and at leisure" what his poets sent him, and was always ready to point out a careless line, an obscure word, an incongruous idea: "The wren," he said, "will often see what has been overlooked by the eagle." In his first letter to Scott, the very letter in which he asked his assistance, he "took the liberty" to remark that the phrase "glories of shade" in Scott's DYING BARD was objectionable, as conveying "incongruous ideas." Elsewhere he declares that *hight* is hopelessly obsolete, that *all-telling* is a more suitable word than the homely *describing*, and suggests *vestment* for *mantle*, and *raging plague* for *pestilence*; and in every case the context confirms the testimony of the ear that he is wrong. Yet niggling of

this sort rarely provoked his correspondents. Here and there one can read between the lines that they thought him a bore, but the strongest remonstrance we can find is a sentence of Boswell's: "You must not be too fastidious, or I succumb." True, his suggestions were not always accepted, and Joanna Baillie sometimes argued the point with spirit and humour. He had objected to an allusion in one of her songs to lakes in Wales; "We must just hope," was her answer, "that a good proportion of our readers will be as ignorant or thoughtless as I was when I wrote it." He says that the lines,

The rarest things to light of day  
Look shortly forth, and shrink away,

are obscure, to which she retorts: "A degree of obscurity is allowed in poetry, and I will with your permission shelter myself under this privilege." But none of his poets suffered in this respect what Burns suffered. Two of his lines,

The world's wrack we share o't,  
The warsle and the care o't,

were transformed by Thomson into,

Though world's care we share o't,  
And may sae meikle mair o't,

with obvious detriment to the sense and the poetry. Even a stanza matchless in its simple pathos does not escape this blundering hand.

When wild war's deadly blast is blawn,  
And gentle peace returning,  
Wi' mony a sweet babe fatherless,  
And mony a widow mourning:

so Burns wrote, and this incorrigible dunderpate turns tears to giggles with,

And eyes again with pleasure beam'd  
That had been blear'd wi' mourning.

After this, a small man would have laid on the cudgel; Burns only wrote: "I cannot alter the disputed lines; what you think a defect I esteem as a positive beauty." No one will say him nay.

We have no space to discuss Thomson's relations with the composers, Pleyel, Hummel, Beethoven (Triton among these minnows) and the rest, though these relations fill not the least interesting pages of an interesting and well-written book. Mr. Hadden has made the most of the somewhat sparse records of Thomson's life available, and added much curious information on music and musicians in Edinburgh a century ago. In his summing-up of Thomson's character he has shown himself perhaps too patient of the man's tiresome pedantries and overpowering respectability; but since he comes, not to bury Thomson but in some sort to resuscitate him, a gentle and warm hand is the just appliance. He has done good service to the memory of an honest man by clearing away the age-long suspicions of his unfeeling parsimony towards Burns; and since Thomson lives only by his connection with Burns, that is well.

GEORGE H. ELY.

## THE PRIVATE SOLDIER IN TIRAH.

BY ONE WHO SERVED WITH HIM.

THE Khyber has always been to Englishmen a place of ill-repute, rivalling in its gloomy associations the Black Hole of Calcutta or the Well of Cawnpore; and never did any place appear to me to deserve an evil reputation more truly than the famous Pass as I first saw it one bleak stormy day at the end of last year. The gaunt bare mountains, crowned with grey clouds of mist, looked more than ever huge and frowning, while at every turn of the winding road the wind dashed the sleet and rain into our faces, sending us shivering at each halt to get what shelter we might under the lee of some friendly boulder. Scarcely a mile but we passed some burned-out fort or gutted block-house, silently reproaching us for having left them so long in undisturbed possession of the Afridis, their blackened ruins looking strangely appropriate to the wild scenery around them.

We were marching up the Khyber as part of a force destined to clear the Pass and reopen the trade-route to Afghanistan, and knowing that, at best, our occupation must last several months, we regarded the country through which we were travelling with very mixed feelings. Hitherto we had been marching through an enemy's country, had razed his towers and fortifications, and had felt the pride of knowing that we had been where no white man had ever set foot before. Now we were in what is practically British territory, marching along a road which the Government of India is pledged to keep open and in good repair, while all round us were

our own forts and strongholds in absolute ruin.

As we descended to the open space above the Khyber stream, where we were to encamp, just below the historic fort of Ali Musjid, we began to realise the damage done us by the Afridis. The caravanserai, in peace-time crowded twice a week with the heavily laden caravans passing between India and Afghanistan, no longer existed. The barracks of the Khyber Rifles were in ruins; and of the fort itself little remained but the outer walls and towers, too solid to be destroyed without dynamite. In fact throughout the whole length of the British Khyber from Lundi Kotai to Fort Maude, almost under the noses of our guns at Jamrud, a determined attempt had been made to wipe out every trace of English authority. There was not an Englishman in the force which entered the Pass that day who did not understand what the effect on the whole Frontier would be if we were to fail to inflict condign punishment on the tribes for such an act of daring insolence.

Later, when we had settled down to our routine work of occupation, kept busy with daily and nightly picquets, escorting convoys, and foraging parties, the Khyber began to appear a more tolerable place of residence; yet few of us ever quite overcame our first impression of the Pass, and most of us will always consider it one of the least pleasant places to which the fortune of war took us during the Tirah Expedition. Of all the enemies we had to contend



with there, the wind was by far the worst. The Khyber Pass is so shaped that at Ali Musjid even the lightest breeze becomes a hurricane. At the spot where we were encamped the Pass widens slightly so as to form a circular basin almost entirely shut in by towering mountains. Out of this basin the road passes to the north just below the fort of Ali Musjid, and enters a narrow gorge some two miles long, which in its turn opens out into what may be described as almost a plain. This plain, the home of the Khyber Zakha Khels, is thickly dotted with villages, and the land, being very fertile, is all under cultivation. It is some five miles in length, about three miles across at its widest part, and ends eventually in Lundi Kotal Fort, our most northerly post in the Khyber. The prevailing wind in the Pass is from the north-east, and, chilled by the snows of Afghanistan, it comes pouring down the Ali Musjid gorge gaining strength with every yard of its advance, till, by the time it reached our camping-ground, the mild breezes of Lundi Kotal had become a howling gale, defying the warmest clothing or the stoutest tent. In fact, had we been encamped in the mouth of an enormous bassoon, with a giant trying the full force of his lungs at the other end, we could not have fared worse. We tried every device to obtain a little shelter, surrounding ourselves with stone walls, burying our tent-pegs under rocks, weighting the skirts of the tents with piles of stones, but all to no purpose. The wind, cannoning against the mountain-sides, seemed to come from every quarter at once, and when, as only too often happened, we were visited by a real storm, no tent could long remain standing. I passed many nights at Ali Musjid clinging with one hand to a tent-pole, while with the other I endeavoured to dissuade various articles of clothing

from starting on an independent journey to Peshawur; but always I had eventually to resign myself to fate, allow my tent to collapse, and seek what shelter was obtainable elsewhere.

One night early in February we were visited by a thunderstorm of more than ordinary severity. It broke over camp shortly after midnight, the usual hurricane being accompanied by torrents of rain, while the most superb lightning played round the mountain-sides, revealing scenes of the wildest confusion. Animals broke loose and careered terrified through the lines; tents were carried off bodily, or at best laid flat and split into shreds; while every now and then a frantic owner could be seen chasing some cherished shirt or precious blanket which sailed away high out of his reach. Daybreak revealed the fact that hardly a single tent was standing in camp; even the heavier mess-tents, the usual refuge of destitute officers on these occasions, had been unable to weather the storm. There was, however, no time that morning for me to enquire into the full extent of the damage done; I had to take my company out to find part of the picquets for the Pass that day, and the pressing need of the moment was to obtain what breakfast was available. The wind still blew strong, and, though the rain had ceased and the worst of the storm was over, cooking was still an impossibility. My breakfast therefore was of the scantiest, so wrapping up anything edible I could collect in a piece of damp newspaper and stuffing the packet into my haversack, I walked off in a very bad temper to seek my company. Knowing that my men had passed an even worse night than I had done, that they were wet through and chilled, and that it was impossible to get them anything hot to warm

them up before we started, I was prepared to find them growling as heartily as I had been five minutes before. On the contrary, when I came up they were merrily cheering a comrade who was up a tree endeavouring to recover a missing cardigan jacket which he had just discovered caught in one of the upper branches. Throughout the march out to the posts we were to occupy, the only allusion I heard to the night of discomfort they had passed was a little chaff at the somewhat bedraggled appearance presented by most of us. Having posted my outlying picquets, I returned to my central one, on a high peak, a good hour's climb above the road, visited the sentries there, and having nothing more to do for the moment, settled myself down in as sheltered a corner as I could find and proceeded to supplement the deficiencies in my breakfast from the contents of my haversack. My meal finished, I began reading the newspaper in which it had been wrapped, and almost immediately the words *Letter from the Front* caught my eye. Then followed one of those senseless criticisms on the conduct of the campaign, carping at everybody and everything, which the British public, when in one of its periodical fits of self-abasement, swallows so eagerly. The letter was of course anonymous, nor do I remember very clearly what the greater part of it was about, and as, shortly after I had finished reading it, a gust of wind blew the paper away, I no longer have it by me to refer to; however, I do remember that it concluded with a most unjustifiable attack on a class which from their position are unable to answer for themselves. "One of the saddest features of the campaign," so it ran, "has been the failure of Tommy Atkins; our boy-battalions have been quite unable to cope with the severe

work they have had to undertake, and what is still worse they have disgraced themselves before the eyes of our native army. Our Sikhs and Goorkhas now openly state to their British officers that if in future they have a row with Tommy Atkins they will go for him straight, and give him a thundering good thrashing; and we all know they can do it if they want to!"

I longed to have the man who wrote that contemptible rubbish up with me on my picquet. I could then have shown him some of our boy-soldiers, in no way more remarkable than their comrades, wet, cold, and hungry, yet cheerfully making fun of their discomforts, and that too at the end of five months' arduous campaigning, and after a night of sleepless discomfort. Many other such letters have appeared from time to time in the English papers, none perhaps quite so brutally blunt in their misstatements, but all suggesting that something is wrong with our English Line regiments, and that our private soldiers have not in the late campaign upheld the high traditions of the British Infantry. Having recently returned to England from the Frontier I have been distressed to find that some of the mud thus thrown has stuck, and that an impression does exist in many quarters that our private soldiers have not distinguished themselves during the late campaign. It is singularly unfortunate that such an impression should exist at a time when the Army is asking for a large increase of men. No one feels an injustice of this sort more keenly than the private soldier; and unless this false impression is removed the time-expired men, now daily returning home from the Frontier, smarting under a sense of wrong, and feeling that their sterling work during the campaign has not been appreciated in England, must

exercise a most harmful influence on future recruiting. The truth is that, while the natural difficulties of the country and the character of the enemy rendered necessary a form of fighting which was peculiarly trying to the rank and file, no class of men have come out of the campaign with greater credit.

The Afridi is by nature and training a skilful skirmisher and a splendid shot; his very life depends upon his being both. Rare indeed is it that the tribes are not at open hostility among themselves, while within the tribe, and even within the family, blood-feuds are so common that every Afridi has far more enemies than friends. A strict code regulates the prosecution of these feuds. During seed-time and harvest, or during the progress of a *jehad* (a sacred war) all quarrels are laid aside; and at all times the persons of women and children are inviolate. But with these exceptions their feuds are prosecuted with a vindictiveness to which the history of the Scottish Highlands in the wildest times can offer no parallel. An Orakzai, who owned a house just below a spot which my picquet occupied for some time on the Sampagher Pass, one day pointed out to me another house within twenty paces of his own. There, he said, lived his enemy, and then he went on to describe with the utmost pride how he had killed the father of the present owner after waiting nine whole months in his tower for a shot, his food and water being brought him by the women of his household, who also were responsible for the proper tending of the fields and cattle of the estate, until this somewhat protracted stalk had been brought to a successful issue. It is this state of affairs which makes the possession of a good rifle the dearest ambition of a fron-

tier tribesman, a good Government Martini being always worth over three hundred rupees, an immense sum of money to a people as poor as the Afridis. The difficulties experienced by the headmen of the tribes in collecting the rifles for the fines we have imposed may be easily imagined, when it is realised that the greater number of these rifles must come from men with blood-feuds on their hands to whom the sacrifice of their arms means sooner or later the sacrifice of their lives. A charming story is told of the Kamber Khels, illustrating how cheaply the tribesmen regard human life. A *moollah* of the tribe once in a moment of candour expressed his regret to his flock that no sacred man among them had yet been called upon to lay down his life for his religion, alleging that the presence in their midst of the tomb of so holy a man would be of the highest value both from a spiritual and a practical point of view, spiritually because the Prophet would regard them all henceforth with greater favour, practically because devout pilgrims attracted to the shrine would enrich the whole tribe by their gifts. The Kambers took counsel together, laid hold of the *moollah* and slew him; and then, having erected a suitable shrine over his corpse, felt that they had done all that was in their power to remove a reproach which reflected upon the whole tribe. Accustomed, like Mr. Bret Harte's gentleman of the back woods, to depend for his life on the quickness with which he can "get on his sights," the Afridi is from dire necessity an expert rifle-shot. The excessively high proportion of casualties among our officers speaks for the accuracy of their aim. So large a number of the men against whom we were fighting had been trained in our own ranks, that the enemy knew

exactly where to look for company and half-company commanders; and it is to this cause that the severe losses among our officers is mainly due, and not, as I have seen stated, because they were forced to unnecessarily expose themselves to induce their men to follow them.

One instance of the rapidity and accuracy with which an Afridi can shoot on occasion particularly struck me. We were as usual engaged in a rear-guard action, and for the moment my company was the rearmost, that is, nearest the enemy. Knowing that the moment we were seen to retire, a few of the more daring among them would follow us up closely on the chance of getting a shot into our backs, I posted half a dozen of my most active marksmen in a loop-holed house on the left of our position. I then withdrew the remainder of the company, taking no trouble to conceal the movement, and slipping quickly into the house where my sharpshooters were concealed, awaited developments. As I anticipated, a few of the enemy seeing, as they thought, the whole company retire, at once began to run forward, hoping to seize the position we were supposed to have left, before the men were once more under cover. Half a dozen shots from the loop-holes of the house caused them to change their minds and take cover where they were. Firing, as my men were, with Lee-Mitford rifles and smokeless powder, the majority of these men were obviously puzzled to know where the shots were coming from; but one of them, quicker than his fellows, as he sat down (sitting is the position from which an Afridi prefers to fire) at once raised his rifle and firing without a moment's hesitation, hit the edge of a loop-hole out of which one of my men was shooting, splintering the mud and stone, of which the house was built, into his face. This shot

was fired from a distance of over five hundred yards.

The tactics I have described were, with modifications, adopted by nearly every regiment during the campaign. Continually fighting rear-guard actions, we soon discovered that our losses occurred almost invariably while we had our backs to the enemy, and mostly while we were engaged in scrambling over some peculiarly difficult piece of ground. The Afridi's fighting-dress consists generally of a loose coat and wide trousers, the whole covered by a grey woollen cloak, so worn as not in any way to interfere with the complete freedom of the limbs. On his feet fastened with a leathern thong, he wears sandals of plaited straw, which afford a perfect foothold both on the rocks and the dry slippery grass which in most places covers the mountain-sides. He carries no impedimenta beyond his rifle, what few rounds of ammunition he may consider necessary for the day's fighting, and a broad-bladed knife. Thus equipped, these tall, lithe, active men cover the ground with an astonishing rapidity. Knowing every stone of the mountains amidst which we were fighting, they were always aware, long before we were ourselves, when the line we were following was likely to get us into difficulties, and seemed almost instinctively to know when a chance of cutting off a detached party, or of getting round our flanks would present itself. Our own men, hampered by the weight of their equipment and still more by their heavy ammunition-boots (a most unsatisfactory foot-gear for mountaineering), were no match for the born hill-men in rapidity of movement. Not infrequently, too, the movements of a retiring company were still more seriously hampered. The barbarous cruelties with which the frontier tribesmen torture a wounded prisoner

before putting him to death, make it impossible, even in cases of the direst necessity, to leave the wounded on the ground as might be done were we fighting a more civilised foe. To get a single wounded man to the rear, in the difficult country in which we were generally engaged, required as many as four, or even more, sound men. It can thus readily be seen that, when once a position had been vacated and we were moving with our backs to the enemy, a very few successful shots put a large number of men out of action and left a company in a very serious position. During these retirements we always endeavoured to move in as loose order as possible, thus affording a smaller mark to the enemy; but the groups engaged in carrying off the wounded formed a very easy target, and in consequence, when men once began to fall, casualties often increased very rapidly. The enemy, with a perfect knowledge of our weak points, as a rule, left us severely alone while we were in position, and attempted when once we were actually retiring, by immediately occupying the places we had left, to catch us with our backs to them; and this their great rapidity of movement frequently enabled them to do. In order to protect ourselves from this danger, we employed a number of picked men to remain behind the company till the last possible moment and cover its retirement. Companies would occupy successive positions, retiring through each other to fresh positions in the rear, the retirement of the rearmost company being of course covered, so far as possible, by those behind it. But occasionally it happened, from the nature of the country in which we were engaged, that the retirement of the company nearest the enemy would not be adequately covered from another position. Then the work of the picked marksmen began. Chosen

for their activity, readiness of resource, and shooting powers, they had ample opportunity for bringing all these qualities into play. Concealed under the best cover available, they would hold on to the last possible moment, picking off the enemy, as they hurried forward to harass the retiring company, and finally, when their comrades had safely crossed the dangerous space and were under cover beyond, they would themselves rejoin the main body at a run, each man working quite independently and choosing his own line of retreat. The men, with very little practice, became surprisingly adept at this mode of warfare, and we very soon discovered that by this means our own losses were considerably diminished and the enemy's dash in following us up was greatly checked.

No more trying form of fighting to the private soldier than these continued rear-guard skirmishes can be conceived. No matter on what duty we were engaged, whether on reconnaissance, foraging, or simply on the line of march, the enemy disappeared absolutely before every advance, contenting themselves with hanging round the rear-guard, rarely, if ever, showing themselves or allowing our men the chance of closing with them. Except at Dargai, and on the Sampagher and Arhanga Passes, the enemy made no real attempt to stand against us; and on the two latter occasions the splendid practice made by the mountain-artillery left the infantry little opportunity for wiping off old scores. Most frequently these skirmishes would occur when we were returning to camp in the evening from some little expedition. The enemy, watching our every movement, would see a small detached force leave camp, bent generally on collecting forage; knowing the exact line by which it must return, they would make no attempt to interfere with its movements, until the march

back to camp had been begun. Then, from behind rocks and trees, and out of houses which a moment before had been unoccupied, a scattered fire would be opened upon the rear company, and the little force would be followed assiduously to within a few hundred yards of camp, darkness, which during the winter months in the Himalayas comes on swiftly and early, often adding to the difficulties of the retreat. The Afridis, looking upon warfare, much as we look upon shooting big game, as a noble and exciting form of sport, rarely engaged us except when the prospects were favourable to a good bag with the minimum of risk to the sportsman. Having to pay highly for every round of ammunition, they were as careful never to fire without a good mark to aim at, as the most jealous gun-shot in England when shooting for his average. Sometimes a solitary tribesman, with about a dozen rounds of ammunition, would conceal himself at daybreak above some path along which a force was due to pass, and, having found his range with a couple of trial shots, would wait quietly hour after hour till the rear-guard was abreast of him, and then firing his remaining cartridges, would go home to boast to his women that every one of his dozen rounds had found a billet in the heart of an infidel.

Their perfect knowledge of an exceptionally difficult country, and the rapidity with which they could cover the ground, enabled the tribesmen to brave us in this manner with perfect immunity. Rarely if ever did we catch any of them napping; the proverbial weasel is easier to catch asleep than an Afridi or an Orakzai. The ease with which they eluded our clumsy attempts at surprises was almost laughable. An example of this occurred during our raid into the Bazar Valley in Christmas week.

On arrival at Jamrud after its march down from Tirah the first Division, consisting of the first and second Brigades and the divisional troops, was ordered to move into the Bazar Valley to punish the still recalcitrant Zakha Khels by destroying their towers and fortified villages, and to enable us to make good our boast that every corner of Afridi land would be visited before we went into winter quarters. For this purpose the Division moved up the Khyber to Lalla China, about a mile south of Ali Musjid, on December 24th, and thence marched into the Bazar Valley in two columns; the first, with which I went, crossing the Alachi Pass and moving by Karamna and Burg, the second by the Choura Pass on China, where both columns were due to rendezvous on December 28th. Our first march took us over the Alachi Pass to Karamna. As usual while we were advancing the resistance we met with was trifling, and we found Karamna itself, and the other villages passed *en route*, entirely deserted. Unfortunately, the track over the Alachi Pass proved villainously bad. Weakened by persistent rain and the unwonted traffic, a large section of it broke away, a calamity which so delayed the transport, that a great part of it and the whole of the rear-guard never reached camp that night. Although most of the regimental baggage came in eventually, it arrived so late that the picquets had already been posted, and they spent in consequence a sorry Christmas night, without food, water or any covering from the rain, while a few of the enemy's marksmen kindly provided them with a little interest and amusement.

Karamna itself, where our Christmas night was spent, merits a word of description. The group of houses which form the village is situated in a



fine open valley of rolling grass land, so rare a feature in that mountainous country as to give us a welcome and quite unusual sense of space and freedom. Each house built, as are all Afridi dwellings, of baked mud, stone, and timber, stood in its own little orchard of apricot, apple, and walnut trees, the yellow of the buildings harmonising well with the green valley and the dark back ground of mountains. Surrounded completely by high loop-holed walls, flanked with towers, the living rooms opened into spacious courtyards, a luxury in which the unusually level ground enabled the Afridi architect to indulge. Built for defence rather than comfort, the houses formed complete castles in themselves, not a window showing in the outer walls, while the few approaches were absolutely commanded from the interior. From its situation and from the solidity, strength, and size of its houses, Karamna was by far the finest Afridi village we had yet visited. As I first saw it, on emerging from the dark gorge which connects Karamna with the Alachi Pass, it looked bright and smiling enough, lit up momentarily by the weak sun which just then broke through the low-lying clouds. As I last saw it two days later, in pouring rain, its towers in ruins, with dark clouds of smoke from the burning buildings hanging over the valley, few sights could have appeared more melancholy.

On the evening of the 26th, having collected our errant baggage and rear-guard, we resumed our march on Burg, the track following the bed of a mountain torrent and winding through a narrow, thickly-wooded defile. Night overtook the tail of the column before we reached camp, the light of bonfires alone enabling us to pick our way over boulders and between the trees. The 27th was occupied in effecting a junction with the second column,

which that day occupied and destroyed China, our objective. At Burg, owing to the broken nature of the ground, the houses were not so large and striking as those at Karamna; one of them, however, contained an interesting feature, which illustrates the conditions under which the Afridis live, even in the piping times of peace. Built on the crest of a low spur, it was, as usual, defended by a high wall and two towers. Some few hundred yards below it, but so placed as to be quite invisible from any point in the upper house, was a second very similar building. The two neighbours had apparently quarrelled, probably as to the amount of water taken for irrigation by one or the other from the stream below. From one side of the upper house a long funnel of baked clay and stone, down which a man could crawl on hands and knees, led to a rock from behind which, himself completely under cover, he could shoot at his leisure into the courtyard of the house below. This funnel was apparently only a recent improvement to the upper house, while a pile of mud, stones, and timber in the courtyard of the lower building showed that its owner meditated taking immediate steps to protect himself from the attentions of his enterprising neighbour.

On the 28th we attempted the surprise of Karamna to which I have alluded. Information had reached us that the place had been re-occupied immediately after our departure on the 26th, and it was determined to make one more attempt to catch the Afridi asleep. Orders were accordingly issued on the evening of the 27th for an advance on China, which lies exactly in the contrary direction; and it was not until we paraded in the darkness at four on the morning of the 28th that our real destination became known. A steady downpour of rain,

while it added to our discomfort, led us to hope that the enemy's watchers would not be on the alert, an Afridi disliking a long tour of sentry-go on a mountain-peak in cold and rain as heartily as any English soldier. The night was still black as we struggled slowly and painfully up the Burg defile, this time without the friendly light of bonfires, breaking our shins at every yard against the rocks with which the bed of the torrent was thickly studded. Shortly after six the advanced troops were in position overlooking the Karamna valley, and, as we thought, the enemy had taken no alarm. A few lights in the valley below further excited our hopes, and led us to believe that for once we had caught our friends napping. We stood for some time wet through and shivering in the cold morning air, waiting for the light of dawn to enable us to attack. This delay was utilised to give us our final instructions, and divide us into parties, each told off to assault a separate house. The bayonet only was to be used, and it was impressed upon the men to be very careful, in the half light of early morning, not to harm the women and children who were believed to have returned with their lords and masters. We had with us men with pickaxes and poles ready to burst open closed doors, and now as an additional precaution against barricades a few sappers with petards were added to every party. At last, about seven, the order to advance was given, and with bayonets fixed we streamed silently down the hillside into the valley and made each for the place appointed us. Having two days before occupied the house I was about to attack, I knew that it had three outer doors, and was acquainted with the exact position of each. My company was, therefore, divided into three parties and went straight for the only

exits by which the enemy, if alarmed, could have escaped. The doors were found shut, but a few sturdy blows with a pickaxe sent them flying, and in we rushed to find—nothing! The three parties met in the central courtyard with looks of the blankest disappointment on their faces, until gradually the comic side of the situation dawned on us and laughing merrily at our own discomfiture we set to work to light fires and dry our wet clothing. Meanwhile, following their usual tactics, the Zakha Khels, who had hardly molested us at all while we were advancing, the moment they found our faces set for home, gathered in numbers round our tail, and out we had to go, to picquet the heights on either side of the Burg defile and take our share in yet another rear-guard action.

And so it happened time after time. Aided by their rapidity of movement and perfect knowledge of country, unhampered by the long train of transport which retarded our progress, the Afridis were able to elude with astonishing ease our attempts to close with them. No one felt these continual disappointments more keenly than the private soldier. Shot at constantly by night without a chance of returning the fire, the men never really saw their enemy except when they were themselves retiring; these frequent rear-guard actions leaving the uncomfortable impression on their minds that they were running away. It was not that the enemy did not suffer, and suffer heavily; but there is small satisfaction to the rank and file never to be engaged except when their hands are tied by the wearisome duty of covering a long line of baggage-animals toiling painfully through some mountain defile. They had no brilliant attacks or dashing charges to compensate them for long cold nights on picquet, often without food or

covering; for not infrequently the extraordinary difficulties of country, or a landslip on the track, would prevent the transport completing even the shortest marches in a single day. During its march down the Mastura Valley to Fort Bara the first Division had to cross the Sapri Pass. This Pass, which is believed never to have been previously crossed by any European, is of no great height, but the track, at all times bad, winds through a dense forest of holm-oak and holly, and had not been improved by a heavy downpour of rain, changing at night to sleet and snow. The first Brigade of the first Division left Bar-and-Khel, our last camp in the Mastura Valley, and began its passage of the Sapri Pass at daybreak. The track grew worse and worse as we advanced, and frequent halts occurred, while the sappers cleared a passage through the trees or blasted away obstructing rocks. So slow was our progress that by nightfall less than half the column had crossed the top of the Pass, a total distance of three miles. In consequence the greater part of the Brigade were compelled to spend the night wherever they happened to be when darkness overtook them, and even the last of those who did manage to get over before nightfall, did not reach camp, another three miles on, till an hour after midnight. On this occasion, too, we were driven to the expedient of lighting bonfires every few yards along the track, progress in the absolute darkness being found impossible without them.

It will readily be understood how easy it was for the Afridis to harass our movements in such a country, and how difficult it was for us, tied as we were to our slow-moving transport-train, to retaliate adequately. Owing to the guerilla tactics of the enemy, it was impossible for us to provide the British taxpayer with stirring accounts

of glorious victories for his breakfast-table. We had apparently little to show for our losses, and in the general feeling of dissatisfaction which this produced in England, the men have been most unjustly accused of inefficiency and of, what has been euphemistically termed, want of dash. Throughout the hardships of a peculiarly arduous campaign, the private soldier did his duty cheerfully and ungrudgingly, waiting patiently for the opportunity of getting at his enemy, which never came. Living under the conditions which prevail on active service, an officer has an opportunity of getting in touch with the men in a way which is impossible in peace-time. When seated round the same picquet-fire with his men, or lying side by side with them in camp, he hears all their versions of the events of the campaign, and from their plainly-worded discussions can tell at once the spirit which animates them. Never at any time did I hear my men express anything but the cheeriest acquiescence in the hardships they were called upon to undergo; up to the very close of active operations they were always as keen for a fight as on the day they first started; and I am quite certain that the testimony of every regimental officer who served in the campaign will be the same as mine. It may perhaps surprise readers at home to learn that the inconvenience which the private soldier felt most was want of water, not for drinking (we generally had enough for that), but for ablutionary purposes. I once spent ten days in a post which had been established on a high peak, to which our mules could only with difficulty bring us sufficient water for drinking and cooking purposes, washing being in consequence out of the question. This became a subject of endless, and not always perhaps very delicate, chaff among the

men. I remember hearing one suggest to another, with an unusually ragged beard, the propriety of shaving when an opportunity should present itself. "Shave!" replied the bearded warrior, "why a wash is a blooming luxury up here, let alone a shave. Last time I had a chance at a wash, twenty of us filed on to a bucket. I was nineteenth; I did not mind the water so much, but, by gum, the towel was a bit thick." My servant summed up the situation from the men's point of view one day by saying, as he shook his head mournfully over my dirty belts, "Ah, Sir, we can't do soldiering in these 'ere mountains." Soldiering, be it understood, is the men's word for cleaning their uniform and accoutrements.

It was only about these petty troubles that one heard any grumbling; cold, wet, and hunger were all taken as part of the day's work. It did one good to see a company of British infantry front form and go straight through an ice-cold mountain torrent with a merry laugh; though it might perhaps be the twentieth time on that march that the winding stream had come in their way, and there was the certainty on reaching the camping-ground of at best a long wait in wet clothes before the arrival of the baggage, and the possibility of having to go straight out on picquet without a chance of getting dry. If

the private soldiers performed no stirring deeds of daring do, they at least showed the stuff of which they were made by a ready and cheerful endurance of whatever hardships came in their way; and it must be remembered that the absence of what may be called any stand-up fight, for, with the exception perhaps of Dargai, there was nothing which could be called by that name, was very keenly felt by the men, and made these very hardships all the more difficult to bear. It is clearly impossible to gain decisive victories over an enemy who refuses to stand to be beaten. But if it be considered that whenever they did face us they were severely beaten, that we visited and surveyed every corner of a hitherto unknown country, that we destroyed the towers and defences of nearly every village in Afridi land, that we consumed our enemy's stores of grain and seasoned wood; and that as a result of this punishment, every tribe has now made complete submission, it will be seen that the campaign has not been so entirely barren of results as it pleases some home-staying wiseacres to assert. And certain at least I am that, when the true history of the expedition comes to be known, the British public will allow a full meed of praise to a class of men who worked their hardest and gave of their best to bring it to a successful conclusion.